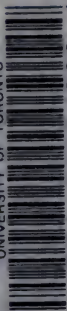


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MEMOIRS
OF
VIDOCQ.



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MEMOIRS

OF

VIDOCQ,

PRINCIPAL AGENT OF THE FRENCH POLICE
UNTIL 1827.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

Translated from the French.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS OF VIDOCQ.

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I know not what species of individuals they were whom MM. de Sartines and Lenoir employed to constitute the police, but I know very well that under their administration thieves were privileged, and there were a great number of them in Paris. Monsieur the lieutenant-general took little care about checking their enterprises, that was not his business; he was not sorry to know them, and from time to time, when he found them to be clever, he amused himself with them.

If a stranger of distinction came to the capital, M. the lieutenant-general soon set the most expert robbers to work upon him, and an honourable recompense was promised to him amongst them who should be sufficiently skilful to rob him of his watch or any valuable trinket.

The theft effected, M. the lieutenant-general was instantly informed of it, and when the stranger presented himself to give his statement of it, he was struck with amazement, for scarcely had he described the missing valuable when it was instantly restored to him.

M. de Sartines, of whom so much has been spoken and so much is still spoken, wrong or right, took no other pains to prove that the police of France was the best in the world. As well as his predecessors, he had a singular predilection for thieves, and all those whose talents had once met with his approbation were sure of being allowed to go on with impunity. He sometimes flung out defiances to them; he commanded them into his presence, and thus addressed them: "Gentlemen, the honour and reputation of the thieves is at stake, it is said that you cannot effect a certain robbery, —the proprietor is on his guard, therfore form your plans, and remember that I have pledged myself to your success."

In these times of happy memory, M. the lieutenant-general of police assumed no less vanity from the skill of his thieves than did the late abbé Sicard of the intelligence of his dumb pupils; great lords, ambassadors, princes, the king himself, were present at their exercises. Now-a-days we bet upon the fleetness of a horse, then people betted on the adroitness of a cutpurse; and if persons wished to amuse themselves in society, they borrowed a thief from the police in the same way as they now have the services of a gendarme. M. de Sartines always had at his elbow some score of the most skilful, whom he kept for the private pleasures of the court; they were generally marquisses, counts, knights, or at least people who had all the fine airs of the courtiers, with whom it was so much more easy to confound them, as at play a similar inclination to cheat established a certain parity between them.

Good company, whose manners and habits did not essentially differ from those of these thieves, could,

without compromising themselves, admit them into their society. I have read, in the memoirs of the reign of Louis XV. that they besought them "to give them an evening," as, in our time, we pray, cash in hand, for a similar favour from M. Comte, the celebrated *Prestidigitateur* (sleight-of-hand man), or some first rate prima donna of the Opera.

More than once, at the solicitation of a duchess, a renowned robber was released from the cells of Bicêtre; and if, when put to the proof, his talents equalled the utmost expectation which the lady had formed of them, it was seldom that M. the lieutenant-general (whether to keep up his credit or to aid his gallantry) refused freedom to so valuable a member of society. At a period in which there were pardons and lettres de cachet in every person's pocket, the gravity of a magistrate, however severe, was not opposed to the knavery of a scoundrel, if he were at all comical or adroit. As soon as he had excited admiration or astonishment he was pardoned. Our ancestors were indulgent and much more easily amused than ourselves; they were also much more simple and much more candid; this is no doubt the reason why they thought so much of whatever was neither simple nor candid. In their eyes, a man who for his exploits was condemned to the wheel, was the *ne plus ultra* of all that was admirable, they felicitated, they exalted, they loved him, and related or listened with pleasure to the relation of his deeds of prowess. Poor Cartouche, when he was led to the Grève (place of execution) all the ladies of the court shed tears,—it was a perfect desolation.

Under the *ancien régime*, the police had not thought of all the benefits they might reap from robbers; it only considered them as a species of amusement; and it was only at a subsequent period that a plan was devised for placing in their hands a portion of the charge of watching for the common security. Naturally the preference was due to the most famous robbers, because they were most probably the most intelligent.

Some were selected as private agents: they were not required to give up their lucrative profession of plundering, but only expected to denounce their comrades who seconded them in these expeditions: on these terms, they were to remain possessors of all the booty they obtained, and never brought to justice for the crimes in which they had participated. Such were the conditional agreements made by the police; as to salary they had none, it was a sufficient favour to be allowed to give themselves up to rapine with impunity. This impunity was only terminated by the commission of some flagrant crime, when the judicial authority intervened, which was but rare.

For a long period none were admitted to the police of safety but robbers not sentenced or liberated: about the year six of the Republic, a certain number of fugitive galley-slaves were added, who solicited the employment of secret agents, whereby they could support themselves in the metropolis. They were edgetools to handle, and, as such, used with much distrust; and the moment they ceased to be useful, they were got rid of. They usually set some other agent to watch them, who, leading them on by false manœuvres, compromised them, and thus furnished a pretext for their arrest. The Richards, Cliquets, Mouille-Farine, Beaumonts, and many others who had been police spies, were all conducted again to the Bagne, where they terminated their career, broken down by the ill usage of their ancient companions whom they had betrayed; again, it was customary for agent to plot against agent, and the most crafty was left in possession of the field.

A hundred of these individuals, whom I have already cited, Compère, Cesar Viocque, Longueville, Simon, Bouthey, Goupil, Coco-Lacour, Henri Lami, Doré, Guillet, called Bombance, Cadet Pommé, Mingot, Dalisson, Edouard Goreau, Isaac, Mayer, Cavin, Bernard Lazarre, Lanlaire, Florentin, Cadet, Herries, Gaffré, Manigant, Nazon, Levesque, Bordarie, were, in a measure, the purveyors to the prisons, to which they sent

each other by turns, mutually accusing each other, and certainly not unjustly; for they all robbed, and they were all privy to the deeds each performed: for how could they have lived without robbery, as the police allowed them nothing for subsistence?

In the beginning those robbers, who wished to have two strings to their bow, were very few in number; the reception given by the other prisoners to any one that had turned *nose*, (informer,) was a cause why the numbers did not increase. To suppose that they were actuated by any feeling of loyalty, would be to form a wrong estimate of these robbers: if the majority of them did not denounce others, it was from a fear of assassination. But it was with this dread as with the apprehension of every danger which must be faced, it gradually disappeared. At a later period the necessity of escaping the arbitrary power with which the police was armed, contributed to render the custom of informations more common amongst the robbers.

When, without any other form of process, and only because it was the gracious pleasure of the police, they put into the *stone jug* (prison) the individuals reputed incorrigible robbers, (a ridiculous denomination in a country in which nothing was ever tried to amend them,) many of these wretched beings, worn out by a detention which had no prospect of termination, devised a singular expedient for obtaining their liberty. These incorrigibles were also in their generation in some way suspected: reduced to a state which made them even envy the fate of the condemned, since they were at least freed at the expiration of their sentence; that they might be brought to trial they resolved to have themselves denounced for some petty robbery which they had oftentimes never committed; sometimes the crime for which they wished to be betrayed was allowed to them for a small payment by their comrade the denouncer, and happy even they who had crimes to sell! They emptied more than one can at the tap-room to the health of the doer of their crime. It was

a lucky day for the voluntary *dénoncé* when he was led from Bicêtre to La Force, but not so fortunate as that in which, when led before the judge, he heard the sentence pronounced, by virtue of which his term of incarceration was limited to a few months only. This period having elapsed, his liberation, which he awaited with the utmost impatience, was at length announced to him; but between the two gates tipstuffs were placed, who seized on his person; and he fell, as before, under the jurisdiction of the *préfet* of police, who sent him again to Bicêtre for an indefinite term.

The women were not better treated, and the prison of St. Lazare was crammed with these unfortunates, whom illegal rigour reduced to despair.

The *préfet* was never tired with these incarcerations; but a moment did arrive, when, from absolute want of room, it was necessary to think of thinning the dungeons, those at least in which the prisoners were literally piled in heaps. He, in consequence, had it suggested to these "incorrigibles," that it depended on themselves to put a termination to their captivity, and that they would deliver immediately lines of route to all those who would volunteer into the colonial battalions. All were persuaded that they were to be allowed to join freely: it had been promised them; but what was their surprise, when the gendarmerie appeared to conduct them in separate brigades to their point of destination. Thenceforward the prisoners did not appear over anxious to put on the uniform; the *préfet*, perceiving that their zeal had marvellously cooled, ordered the gaoler to solicit them to enter, and if they would not, to have recourse to compulsory measures. It may be relied on that a jailor, under such circumstances, would even exceed his orders. He of the Bicêtre not only solicited the prisoners who were in health, but even those who were not so; no infirmity, however severe, was a ground of exemption in his eyes: they were all fitting, in his opinion,—hump-backed, one-eyed, lame, and old. In vain did they remonstrate; the *préfet* had

decided that they were soldiers, and, willing or unwilling, they were transported to the isles of Oleron or Ré, where officers, selected from amongst the most brutal in the army, treated them like negroes.* The atrocity of this measure was the cause that many young men, who would not submit to such treatment, offered themselves to the police as auxiliaries: Coco-Lacour was one of the first to try this path of safety, the only one open to him. At first, some difficulties were raised against his admission; but at length, persuaded that a man who had dwelt amongst robbers from his earliest infancy would be an admirable acquisition, the préfet consented to enrol him amongst the secret agents. Lacour made a formal engagement to become an honest man, but could he keep such an undertaking? He was without pay, and when the appetite is keen, the stomach sometimes prevails over the conscience.

To be a spy without pay, what a situation! it is to be a spy and thief at the same time; and thus, the evidence of the necessity established against the secret agents a prejudice which always told against them, whether innocent or guilty. If a brigand, to be revenged upon them, should determine to inculpate them as his accom-

* The colonial battalions, at a period when France had no colonies, were destined to be the scum of our land force. The officers were almost all swindlers and cheats, dishonoured from misconduct, and rather intended to carry a constable's staff than a soldier's sword. When imperial despotism existed in all its vigour, the colonial battalions recruited amongst a crowd of respectable citizens, military or otherwise, whom Fouché, Rovigo, Clarke, &c. immolated to their caprices, or those of the master whose slaves they were. Generals, colonels, adjutant-commanders, magistrates, and priests, were used as common soldiers in the isles of Ré and Oleron. The police had united in this exile royalists and patriots with grey hairs, who were compelled to submit to the same discipline as the incorrigible robbers. The Commandant Latapie made them march side by side without distinction.

plices, with or without proof it was impossible for them to clear themselves.

I could state a volume of circumstances, in which, although strangers to the crimes with which they are charged, secret agents have been condemned by the tribunals, but I shall confine myself to the two following facts.

M. Hémart, the first president, went into the country ; on alighting from his carriage, he saw that the port manteau containing his property was carried off. Enraged with the authors of this deed he determined to use all means to detect them, and bring down on their heads all the severity of the laws. They had only incurred a correctional punishment, but M. Hémart could not resolve on considering as a simple larceny a robbery which was effected to his individual loss ; chastisement would be too lenient, it was a crime which he wished to make it, and, with this intent, he presented a petition to the chief judge, that he might decide the question, if the breaking open after committing the robbery did not constitute an aggravation of the case ?

M. Hémart sought an affirmative decision, and as he desired so was the judge's sentence. Thereupon the robbers, whose audacity had roused the anger of the president, were discovered and apprehended. They had been found with the property, and it was difficult to deny it ; but they suspected an old *pal* of having denounced them, named Bonnet, a secret agent ; they pointed him out as their accomplice, and Bonnet, although innocent, was sentenced with them to twelve years' imprisonment and fetters.

At a subsequent period two other secret agents, Herriez the younger, and Ledran, his brother-in-law, had stolen some portmanteaus, and having emptied them to divide the spoil, deposited them with two colleagues, Tormel the father and son, who, afterwards denounced by them, were tried and convicted of a robbery of which the perpetrators alone had the booty. Whether at the Bicetre or La Force, not a day arrived

that I did not see some of these worthies arrive, and hear them mutually reproach each other with their bad conduct. From morn till eve these supernumerary spies were quarrelling, and their violent debates unfolded to me how perilous was the path which I had chalked out for myself. But I did not despair of avoiding the dangers of the profession, and all the mishaps of which I was witness were so many examples to me, from which I formed my own line of conduct, which would render my fate less precarious than that of my predecessors.

In the second volume of these memoirs I have spoken of the Jew Gaffré, under whose control I was, in some measure, placed at the moment of my entering the police. Gaffré was the only secret agent with a salary I was no sooner united with him than he tried to get rid of me; I pretended not to see through his intention, and if he contemplated my destruction, I resolved on my side, to defeat his plans. I had a dangerous game to play: Gaffré was wily as a snake. When I knew him he was called the high-priest of thieves. He had begun at eight years of age, at eighteen he was whipped and marked on the Place du Vieux-Marché, at Rouen. His mother, who was mistress of the famous Flambard, chief of the police in that city, had endeavoured to save him: but although one of the handsomest Jewesses of her time, the magistrates would grant nothing to her charms: Gaffré was too culpable; Venus in person could not have prevailed upon his judges. He was banished. However, he did not quit France, and when the revolution burst forth, he was not slow in resuming the old course of his exploits in a band of chauffeurs, amongst whom he figured under the name of Caille.

Like the majority of his confederates, Gaffré had completed his education in the prisons, and then he had become an universal genius, that is to say, there was no species of *prigging* in which he was not fully expert. Contrary to custom, he adopted no special

of peculiar line of conduct ; he was essentially the man of the moment ; nothing came amiss to him, from *cutting a weasand, to drawing a wipe* (assassination to pocket-picking). This general aptitude, this variety of contrivance, had enabled him to amass a small sum. He had, as they say, *shot in the locker*, and could live without working ; but people of Gaffré's profession are industrious, and although he was liberally paid by the police, he kept on adding to his accumulations the produce of some unlawful exactions, which did not prevent him from being much considered in his quarter, (then the Martin,) when, with his acolyte Francfort, another Jew, he had been named captain of the national guard.

Gaffré was afraid that I should supplant him, but the old fox was not cunning enough to hide his apprehensions ; I watched him, and was not slow in discovering that he was manœuvring to get me into a snare. I appeared to be blindly led by him, and he chuckled internally at his anticipated victory ; when, wishing to catch me in a plot which I saw through, he was himself taken in the net, and in the end shut up for eight months in the depot.

I never allowed Gaffré to surmise that I had suspected his treachery, and he continued to dissemble the hatred which he bore towards me, and that so well, that we were apparently the best friends in the world. I was on the same terms with many robbers who were secret agents, and with whom I had associated during my detention. These latter detested me heartily, and although we kept smiling countenances towards each other, they flattered themselves that they should pay me off some day. Goupil, the Saint George of pugilism, was amongst those who afforded me their friendship, and, constantly attached to my person, filled the office of tempter ; but he was not more fortunate nor more adroit than Gaffré. Compère, Manigant, Corvet, Bouthey, Leloutre also tried to catch me tripping : but I was invulnerable, thanks to the advice of M. Henry.

Gaffré having recovered his liberty, did not renounce his design of ruining me. With Manigant and Compère he plotted to get me condemned ; but, persuaded that having once defeated him he would not leave me, but return to the charge with vigour, I was incessantly on my guard. I awaited him firmly, when one day that a religious solemnity had attracted a vast crowd to Saint Roch, he announced to me that he had orders to attend there with me. "I shall take Compère and Manigant with us," he added, "as we learn that at this moment there are many strange robbers in Paris, and they will point out to us all they know." "Take whom you please," I answered, and we set out. When we reached our destination, there was a considerable crowd ; the service we were upon did not require that we should all unite at one point. Manigant and Gaffré went first. Suddenly, in the place they were, I remarked an old man, who, by being pressed against a pillar, did not know where to put his head ; he did not cry out, from respect to the sacred place, but his whole person was disarranged and his wig knocked awry ; he lost his footing ; his hat, which fell off, and which he anxiously followed with his eyes, was rolled from place to place, sometimes from and sometimes towards him. "Gentlemen, I beseech you, I beg of you," were the only words which he pronounced in a most piteous tone ; and holding in one hand a gold-headed cane and in the other his snuff-box and pocket handkerchief, he shook his hands in the air, as if he would have reached the ceiling with them. I found he had lost his watch, but what could I do ? I was too far distant from the old gentleman ; besides, my advice would be too late ; and then Gaffré, was he not also a witness of the scene ? and although he said nothing, he doubtless had some motive for it. I adopted the wisest plan, and was silent to see what would ensue, and during the space of two hours, the duration of the ceremony, I had an opportunity of observing five or six of these concerted squeezes, and saw Gaffré and Manigant always in

them. The latter, who is now in the Bagné at Brest, under a sentence of twelve years' fetters, was at this period the most expert pick-pocket in the capital; he excelled in extracting the money from a person's pocket and transferring it into his own; with him the transmutation of metals was reduced to a simple displacing, which he effected with incredible talent.

The short stay in the church of St. Roch was not particularly productive; however, without including the old man's watch, he had stolen two purses and some other articles of value.

After the ceremony had terminated, we went to dine at a coffee-house; the worthies paid the expenses, and nothing was spared; we drank deeply, and at the dessert they confided to me what I could not fail to have known. At first they only mentioned the purses, in which they found a hundred and seventy-five francs in hard cash. The bill paid, there remained a surplus of one hundred francs, of which they handed me over twenty as my portion, counselling me to be silent and discreet. As money has no name, I thought there was no reason for a refusal.

The party appeared enchanted at having thus initiated me, and two flasks of Beaune were emptied to celebrate the occasion. No mention was made of the watch, nor did I allude to it; not only that I might appear ignorant of it, but I was also all eyes and ears, and was not slow in learning that it was in Gaffré's possession. I then began to assume the appearance of a drunken man, and shamming a call of necessity, I desired the waiter to lead me where I wished to go. He conducted me out, and when alone I wrote with a pencil this note:—

"Gaffré and Manigant have just stolen a watch in the church of Saint Roch; in an hour, unless they change their intention, they will cross the market of St. Jean. Gaffré carries the spoil."

I hastily descended, and whilst Gaffré and his confederate thought me engaged up five pair of stairs,

I got into the street and despatched a messenger to M. Henry. I went back again without loss of time, and my absence had not been of long duration. When I entered I was out of breath, and as red as a turkey cock. They asked me if I felt better!

"Yes, a great deal," I stammered out, and falling nearly under the table.

"Steady boys, steady," says Manigant.

"He sees double," observed Gaffré.

"He is done up," added Compère, "quite done up, but the air will revive him."

They gave me some sugar and water. "Go to ——" I cried out, "What! water for me, water for me!"

"Yes, it will do you good."

"Do you think so?"

I extended my hand, but instead of seizing the glass I upset and broke it. I then played a few silly drunken tricks which amused the party, and when I judged that M. Henry had received my despatch, and taken measures accordingly, I insensibly came to myself.

On going out, I saw with pleasure that our route was not changed. We went towards the market of St. Jean, and there saw a file of soldiers. When I saw them sitting at the door, I did not doubt but that they were there in consequence of my message, and the less so as I observed Ménager the inspector following us. When we passed they approached us, and, taking us politely by the arm, invited us to enter the guard-house. Gaffré could not imagine what this meant, but supposed the soldiers were in error. He wished to argue the point. They desired him to obey, and he was compelled quietly to submit. They began with me, but found nothing; when it came to Gaffré's turn he was not at all easy. At length the fatal watch was produced from his fob: he was a little disconcerted, but at the moment of his examination, and particularly when he heard the commissary say, "*Write: a watch set with brilliants,*" he turned pale and looked at me.

Had he any suspicion of what had passed? I do not think so, for he was convinced that I did not know of the robbery of the watch; and, besides, he was sure that, if I had known it, as I had not left them, I could not have turned *nose*.

Gaffré, on being questioned, pretended that he had bought the watch; they were persuaded that this was a lie, but the person who was robbed not being present to claim his property, it was not possible to condemn it. He was, however, confined for a time in Bicêtre, and then sent under *surveillance* to Tours, whence at a later period he returned to Paris. This villain died there in 1822.

At this period, the police had so little confidence in their agents, that there was no kind of expedient to which they had not recourse to prove them. One day Goupil was let loose upon me, and came with a singular proposal.

"You know François, the publican," said he to me.

"Yes, and what of that?"

"If you will help me, we will draw a tooth or two from him."

"How?"

"Why he has very frequently addressed the prefecture, to obtain permission to keep open house during part of the night, which request has always been denied; and I have given him to understand that it only depends on you to procure what he is so anxious to have."

"You are wrong, for I can do nothing."

"You can do nothing! very true, certainly! Oh you can do nothing, but you can buoy him up with the hope that you can do it."

"That is true, but wherein would be the benefit to him?"

"Say the benefit to us. François, if well managed, would *bleed* well. He is already told that you are the man who is 'all in all' in the administration: he has a good opinion of you, and so no doubt he will *tip* freely on the first requisition."

"Do you think he will part with the *blunt*?"

"I am sure, my boy, he will *shell out* six hundred francs as easily as a penny; we shall handle the ready, that is the main thing, and we can afterwards leave him to his reflections."

"Well, but he will be enraged."

"Never mind, let him do his worst; but give yourself no trouble, I will provide for all. No *black and white work* (writing) mind; you know the proverb, 'Writings are men, words but women.'"

"True as gospel; no receipt for cash in hand, and yet we can safely pocket."

"Certainly, he who sows should reap; and no labour no profit. Meanwhile I will go and see how the land lies, and sound the old boy."

Goupil then took my hand, and, shaking it heartily, added, "I am now going straight to François, I will tell him you will call in the evening; I shall fix the hour for eight o'clock, but do not you come till eleven, because (as you must say) you will have been delayed; at midnight we shall be told to go out, you must appear to comply with this formality, and François will seize the opportunity of urging his request. You are a man of experience, and know how to play your cards. Farewell for the present."

"Adieu," I replied, and we separated. Scarcely, however, had we turned our backs on each other than Goupil returned.

"Oh!" said he, "you know that very frequently the feathers are more valuable than the bird; I want a pluck at the feathers, otherwise ————" and he assumed a peculiar attitude, opening his enormous mouth, holding his hands about six inches from the ground, as if he was about to scrape the pavement, and completing the menace by drawing back his body and advancing his legs, in which the mobility of his feet were not the least comical part of his attitude.

"All's right," said I to Goupil, "you shall not swallow me. We will divide,—it is a bargain."

“ On the word of a thief.”

“ Yes, make yourself easy.”

Goupil immediately took the road to the Courtille, where he very frequently went, and I that of the prefecture of police, when I informed M. Henry of the proposal made to me. “ I hope,” said he, “ that you will not lend yourself to the plot.” I protested that I was not at all inclined to do so, and he evinced his pleasure at my free communication. “ Now,” he added, “ I will give you a proof of the interest that I take in you ;” and he arose to reach from his chest a packet of papers, which he opened. “ You see it is full, and they are all reports against you : they are in abundance, but yet I employ you, because I do not believe one word of what they say.”

These reports were the production of the inspectors and peace officers, who, through a spirit of jealousy, continually accused me of robbery. That was the burden of their song, as well as that of the robbers whom I had detected in the very act : they denounced me as their accomplice, but when I was on every side exposed to unfavourable representations, I defied calumny, I braved its assaults, and its teeth were broken against the brazen buckler of truth, which, by the means of incontestable *alibis*, or impossibilities of another nature, became resplendent by the evidence of facts. Accused daily for sixteen years, I was never betrayed by it : once only I was interrogated by M. Vigny the judge. The complaint laid before him had some colouring of truth, but I had only to appear before him and the whole was proved false, and I was instantly freed from all suspicion.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The biter bit—Provocation—Wolves, lambs, and robbers—My profession of faith—*The band of Vidocq* and the old man of the mountain—No morality in the police—My calumniated agents—“*A cat in gloves catches no mice*”—The fishing rod—Put on gloves—Desplanques, or the love of independence: or where the devil has he hid himself?—The regulation of MM. Delaveau and Duplessis—The movable roulette tables and the *ultra philanthropist*—Proper manners, proper bearing, proper studies—Long and short gowned Jesuits—The reign of under petticoats—Obstinacy of robbers called reformed—Coco-Lacour, and *an old friend*—*Castigat ridendo mores.*

GAFFRÉ and Goupil having failed in their plans for my destruction, Corvet resolved to try his success in the same way. One morning, when I was in want of some particular information, I went to the house of this agent, whose wife was also attached to the police. I found both man and wife at their lodging, and although I only knew them from having once or twice cooperated with them in some unimportant discoveries, they gave me the information I required with so much good will, that, like a man who has the feelings of good fellowship towards those with whom he is associated, I offered to regale them with a bottle of wine at the nearest *cabaret*. Corvet alone accepted the proffer, and we went together and seated ourselves in a private room.

The wine was excellent; we drank one, two, three bottles. A private room and three bottles of wine leads on to confidence. About an hour afterwards, I thought I perceived that Corvet had some proposal to make, and at length he somewhat suddenly said, “Listen, Vidocq, (and he knocked his glass on the table with some emphasis,) you are a jolly lad, but you are not open amongst friends; we know well enough that you are a fellow *workman*, but you’re a *deep file*: we two might do a fine stroke of business.”

I pretended not to comprehend him.

“Nonsense, come, come,” he replied, “no *gammon*, that will not go down with me, I know you are a

cunning fellow although I don't know your *place of work* I will speak to you as I would to my own brother, if I think I may depend upon you. It is all very well to serve the police, but there is nothing to be made out of it, and a crown changed is a crown spent and gone. Now if you will keep counsel, there is a job or two which I have in my eye which we will do together and which will not hinder us from doing our friends a good turn."

"How," said I, "would you abuse the confidence placed in you? that is not right, and I am sure that if it were known at the prefecture they would give you two or three years of it at Bicêtre."

"Ah! you are like all the rest," replied Corvet, "you are going to be mealy-mouthed and squeamish; you are delicate, are you; come, come, we know one another."

I testified much astonishment at his holding such language to me, and added that I was fully persuaded that he only said so to try me, or perhaps lay a snare for me.

"A snare!" cried he, "a snare! I bring you into trouble, I had rather put my own neck in jeopardy; you must be mad to suppose it. I do not beat about the bush; when I say anything it is blunt and straightforward; with me there is no back door, and as a proof that all is not as you believe, I will tell you that no later than this evening I am going to work. I have already laid my plan, the keys are made, and if you will come with me, you shall see how I will do the job."

"I doubt you have either lost your senses, or you wish to entangle me in your net."

"What, do you not give me any credit for better feelings? (Elevating his voice.) I tell you then you shall not have a finger in the pie. What more would you have? I shall take my wife with me, it will not be the first time, but it will be the last if you choose to make it so. With two men there is always a resource at hand. The business of to-day regards you nothing;

you will wait for us in the coffee-house at the corner of the Rue de la Tabletterie. It is almost facing where we are going to work, and as soon as you see us come out do you follow; we will sell the booty, and we will go snacks. After that you will no longer distrust us. What think you?"

There was so much appearance of sincerity in this discourse, that I really hardly knew how to act with Corvet. Did he want an accomplice, or did he seek a means of destroying me? I have still my doubts on this point; but in either case Corvet was a manifest rogue.

By his own confession, his wife and he committed robberies. If he had spoken the truth, it was my duty to deliver him up to justice; if, on the contrary, he had lied, in the hope of entrapping me into a criminal action to denounce me, it was only right to prosecute the plot to its termination, that I might show to the authorities that to tempt me was labour in vain.

I had endeavoured to dissuade Corvet from his design, but when I saw that he persisted, I feigned to allow myself to be seduced.

"Well then," I said, "since it must be so, I accept the proposal."

He instantly embraced me, and the rendezvous was fixed for four o'clock, at a vintner's. Corvet returned home, and as soon as he had left me I wrote to M. Allemain, commissary of police, in the Rue Cimetière St. Nicolas, to inform him of the robbery which was to be perpetrated in the evening. I gave him, at the same time, all the necessary information for seizing on the culprits in the very commission of their crime.

I was at my post at the agreed hour; Corvet and his wife were not long after me, and after drinking a bottle or two of wine to cheer them in their work they proceeded on their enterprise. A moment afterwards, and I saw them enter a court-yard in the Rue de la Haumerie. The commissary had so well contrived that he apprehended the two at the moment when, laden

with booty, they left the apartment they had ransacked. This couple were condemned to ten years' confinement.

During the trial Corvet and his wife asserted that I had tempted them to the robbery. Certainly in the line I had pursued, there was nothing that could be construed into such a temptation ; besides in a robbery I do not see how there can be any provocation possible. A man is honest or he is not : if he be honest, no consideration can be sufficiently powerful to determine him on committing a crime : if he be not, he only wants the opportunity, and is it not evident that it will offer itself sooner or later ?

And if this opportunity makes a rogue, may not the robber become an assassin ? Certainly he who labours to demoralize a frail being, and to inculcate pernicious principles, for the horrid pleasure of ultimately delivering him up afterwards to the executioner, must be the most infamous of scoundrels. But when a man is perverted, when he declares himself in a state of hostility with his equals, to draw him into a snare ; to attract him by hopes of booty which yet he is prevented from gaining ; to hold out to him the bait, which eventually takes him ;—is not this rendering a real service to society ? It is not the sheep which is placed in the wolf's trap which creates his depredatory instinct. He has the same inclination for robbing ; he is predisposed to the action, and the action will be infallibly accomplished ; for, at one time or other, the robber will go any lengths to perfect his crime. What is important is, when an attempt is made and the authors detected, the eye of the police is upon them, and the body of society thus guarded and benefitted. In fact I see no harm, but quite the reverse, in casting before the viper the piece of cloth on which he may exhaust his venom.

In a large city like Paris, gangrened hearts are never wanting, nor minds criminally perverted ; but every robber who infests the metropolis has not the mark of crime upon his brow. Some are skilful enough to go on a long career of guilt before they are detected.

They are culpable, and should be brought to justice and convicted, that is to say, if taken with booty in hand. Well, when individuals of this kind have been pointed out to me, whether because their connections and habits rendered them suspected, or because they led a free life without any ostensible means of existence, to cut short their exploits I held out a snare for them; and, I confess it without shame, I did not make the least hesitation in doing so. Robbers are persons whose nature is to appropriate to themselves the property of another, just as the wolves are voracious animals whose nature is to attack the herds. We can scarcely confound the wolves with the lambs; but if it were possible that the one was concealed in the skin of the other, would a shepherd, when he saw the mark of their teeth, be to blame, if, to prevent future attempts, he tempted the voracity of all those whom he thought capable of biting? We may be certain that the one that bites is the one who has always been inclined to bite. If Corvet and his wife have robbed, it is that already, by fact or intent, they were robbers. On the other hand, I had never provoked them; I had only simply adhered to their proposition. It may be objected towards me, that by threatening them I could prevent them from committing the robbery which they had premeditated; but to threaten them was not to correct them: to-day they might have abstained, to-morrow they would have carried off a new booty: and certainly to have done so, they would not have called for my aid. What would have been the result? That the moral responsibility of the crime committed would have fallen on me with all its onus. And then if Corvet had any intention of implicating me in an affair of the kind, with any kind of promise from the *préfet* of police, after the event, did not my own personal safety prescribe the necessity of precaution, so as to undermine any trap which might be laid to ensnare me, and thus defeat those who invented and those who were the agents of it. This was the result I arrived at by denouncing Corvet to the

commissary of the quarter in which his operations were to be carried on, instead of denouncing him to the *préfet*. By following this plan, I was assured that if he had been set on they would disavow it, and justice would be done.

If I have insisted on the fact of provocation in this affair, it is because it was the general assertion and means of defence of the majority of those whom I was the cause of apprehending in the actual commission of robbery. We shall find, in the next chapter, that the idea of resorting to so pitiful an excuse was often suggested to them by my enemies. The recital of a plot of four agents of my brigade, Utinet, Chrestien, Decostard, and Coco-Lacour, will show how contemptible were the strongest imputations against me.

I will not here repeat what I have elsewhere said on the provocation of political measures. The discontent, legitimate or not, the superciliousness, the exasperation, nay, the fanaticism, do not constitute a state of perverseness; but they may produce a sort of momentary blindness, under the influence of which the most honourable man, the most virtuous citizen, will be easily misled. Captious reasonings, perfidious combinations, an intrigue to which he has no clue, may lead him to the abyss. Satan comes and carries him to the top of a mountain, whence he shows him the kingdoms of the world; he shows him the whole of a chimerical arsenal of armies, cannons, soldiers, and people ready to rise against oppression. He seduces him by impossibilities, and for impossibilities salutes him by the title of liberator; and the wretch, whose imagination gives birth to speculative ideas, thinks that he has at last found a point of strength and a lever to shake the world. Impelled by the most execrable of demons, he dares to utter his dreams: hell has its witnesses, its judges, and the delirium terminates at the scaffold's foot: such is, in a few words, the history of the *patriots* of 1816, excited by the infamous Schilkin. But let us return to the "brigade de sûreté."

After the formation of this brigade, the peace-officers and their agents, who bore me no love, cried out, "shame on't:" it was they who spread about the most absurd tales of me; they coined the phrase of the "band of Vidocq," which was applied to the persons composing the police of safety: they said that it consisted only of freed galley-slaves, or of skilful old pick-pockets, who knew all the *rigs* of *prigging a reader* or *fogle*.

"Can," said they, "such a man be allowed to have such a band? Is it not placing at his control the life and money of the citizens?" At another time they compared me to the Old Man of the Mountain; "When he likes he will cut all our throats," said the respectable M. Yvrier; "has he not his Seids? It is infamous; in what times do we live!" he added, "there is no morality, not even amongst the police." The worthy old fellow, with his morality! But it was not that which disquieted him; these gentlemen, vulgarly called peace-officers, would willingly have forgiven us for having been at the galleys, if the *préfet* had not, when he wished to detect or apprehend a robber, had more reliance on us than on them. Our address and our experience had the preference with the magistracy: and thus, when it was shown to them that all their efforts to effect my disgrace were useless, they changed their batteries; they did not attack me more directly, but they assailed my agents, and all the means possible of making them odious to the authorities seemed good. If a robbery were committed, either at the doors of the theatre or within the walls, they drew up a report, and the members of the terrible brigade were designated as the presumed authors of it. It was the same every time there was any large meeting, the peace-officers did not allow one occasion to escape of attacking the brigade. Not a cat was lost but they were accused of the robbery.

Fatigued at last with these perpetual inculpations, determined to put an end to them. To reduce thes'

respectable gentlemen to silence, I could not cut off the arms of my agents, for they were absolutely needful to them: but to conciliate all, I told them that in future they must constantly wear leather gloves, and I declared that if I met any one of them ungloved I would instantly dismiss him.

This entirely disconcerted the malevolents; henceforward it was impossible to reproach my agents for *working* in the crowd. The peace-officers, who well knew that the hand cannot act adroitly when covered, kept their mouths closed, remembering the proverb, "*a cat in gloves catches no mice.*" One morning I gave this order to my agents as one which I had hit upon to put a stop to all the tattle of which they were the object.

"Gentlemen," said I, "they will no more credit your probity than they will the chastity of priests. Well, then, to prove how wrong they are, I have thought that nothing would be so natural as, in any case, to paralyze the limb which is the instrument of sin; in this instance, gentlemen, it is your hands; I know you are incapable of making improper use of them, but to avoid a shadow of suspicion, I expect that henceforward you will not appear abroad without gloves."

This precaution, I must say, was not called for by any conduct of my agents, for no robber, or galley-slave, whom I employed ever compromised himself as long as he formed one of my brigade; some have fallen again into evil ways, but their return to guilt was after having been dismissed from my band. Knowing the former course and situation of these men my power over them was arbitrarily exercised; to keep them to their duty, a will of iron and most determined resolution was required. My ascendancy over them arose from their not having any acquaintance with me previous to my entering into the police service: many had seen me at La Force or Bicêtre; but I had never been otherwise than a brother prisoner, and I could defy them to produce one affair in which I had participated, either with others or with themselves.

It must be stated that the majority of my agents were freed convicts, whom I had myself apprehended when they had been sinning against justice. At the expiry of their sentence they came to beg me to enrol them, and when I found them intelligent, I made use of them in my brigade of safety. Once in the brigade they became instantly reformed, but only in one particular,—they robbed no more: as to the rest, they were always debauched, addicted to wine, women, and play; many of them lost their monthly pay at gaming instead of paying their lodging, or the tailor who provided them with clothes. In vain did I devise means of giving them the least possible leisure, they always contrived to find time enough to indulge in their vicious habits. Compelled to devote eighteen hours per day to the police they were less debauched than if they had been entirely at leisure, but yet they committed various follies, which, when they were but trifling, I usually overlooked. To treat them with less indulgence would have been to show my ignorance of the old adage, which says, “it is impossible to stop the flow of the river.” So long as their excesses were not connected with their duties, I confined myself to a reprimand, and those reprimands were frequently but so many strokes of a sword in water, but yet sometimes, according to the men I had to deal with, the due effect was produced. Besides, all the agents under my orders were persuaded that I watched them closely and incessantly; and they were not mistaken, for I had my spies, and through them learnt all they did: in fact, whether far or near, I never lost sight of them, and any infraction of the rules and regulations laid down for them was immediately punished. What will appear surprising is, that under every circumstance in which the service required it, these men, so ill disciplined in other respects, conformed to my will, even when there was a matter of danger to be performed. No man but myself, I may say, could have commanded equal devotion.

I insert my regulations for the information of my readers, who may see that without mingling in politics I had occupation enough.

PREFECTURE OF POLICE.

Regulations for the private brigade de sûreté.

Art. 1. "The private brigade de sûreté is divided into four detachments. Each of the agents commanding one detachment receives his instructions from his chief, and he receives his orders of surveillance and manœuvre from the chief of the second division of the prefecture of police; with whom he must consult every day, and whenever it may be necessary for the maintenance of order and the security of persons and property. He shall make a return to him every morning of the result of the surveillance of the preceding evening and night of his brigade, and every chief of a detachment shall bring his private report.

2. "The private agents shall exercise a severe and active surveillance to prevent offences; they shall arrest, as well on the public way as at the cabarets, and other public places, persons escaped from fetters and prisons; the freed galley-slaves who cannot show any permission for residing in Paris; those who have been sent away from the capital to their own homes, to remain there under the surveillance of the local authorities, conformably to the penal code, and who have returned to Paris unauthorized; as well as those apprehended in the very act of robbery. They shall conduct these latter before the commissary of police of the quarter, to whom they shall make their report, to inform him of the reasons for apprehending these suspected persons. In case this public functionary should be absent, they shall leave them at the nearest station, and carefully search them in presence of the commandant then on duty, that it may be correctly stated as to what property was found upon them. They shall always ask of these suspected persons their abode, to verify subsequently, and

in case of a false residence being given, they shall inform the commissary of police, who will testify concerning the same. They shall point out also the witnesses who may be heard, and of whom they shall take care to procure the names and residences.

3. "The private agents can only confine in the stations the individuals before mentioned. They shall not take them thence without an order from the chief of the brigade, to whom they must give an account of their operations, or by virtue of a superior order.

4. "The police agents may not enter any private house to apprehend a person suspected of crime without being provided with an order, and without being accompanied by a commissary of police, if there be a search to be made in the house.

5. "The police agents must always walk alone, that they may the more easily observe the persons passing on the public way, and shall make occasional halts in the most populous thoroughfares.

6. "Circumspection, veracity, and discretion, being indispensable qualities for every police agent, any defection in these will be severely punished.

7. "The police agents are prohibited, day or night, from extending their surveillance to any other quarter of the city than that appointed for them by their chief, unless some extraordinary event shall imperatively summon them, and of which they shall give an exact report.

8. "The police agents are also forbidden from entering the cabarets and other public places, to sit at table and drink with common women, or other individuals who may compromise them. Those who tipple, have secret and habitual connections with female thieves or common women, or live with one of them, shall be severely punished.

9. "Gaming, being the vice which most particularly leads a man to commit base actions, is expressly forbidden to the police agents. Those who are found

playing for money in any place shall be instantly suspended from their station.

10. "The police agents are required to give in to their chief of brigade an account of how their time is passed.

11. "The first infringement of the regulations herein laid down will be punished by a mulct of two days' pay : in case of a recurrence of the offence this mulct shall be doubled, besides the addition of a severe punishment should that be judged requisite.

12. "The chief of the brigade is especially charged to watch over the execution of these regulations. This is also particularly recommended to the chiefs of detachments who receive his orders, and should make their reports daily, as to what they have done conformably therewith, as well as of those they may have given to those agents under them.

"*Given at the prefecture of police.* 1818.

"The Minister of State and Préfet of Police.

(Signed)

"COMTE ANGLES."

"By his Excellency, the Secretary-general of the Prefecture.

(Signed)

"FORTIS."

Under M. Delaveau, I wished to add a few articles to the above ; but the rigid préfet, who filled Paris and the suburbs with his ambulatory roulette tables, refused to give his sanction to a regulation which anathematized gambling. I had also classed amongst the duties of my agents, the right of sending away from the Quai de l'Ecole, the Champs Elysées, and all public places, those herds of wretches, of all ranks and ages, who abandon and prostitute themselves to a shameful and disgusting purpose, which seems to have in some measure emigrated with the jesuits. I often begged for the repression of these disorders, but Messrs. Delaveau and Duplessis constantly turned a deaf ear to it ; in

fact it was impossible for me to make them understand that the law which punishes the offence against good manners is applicable to these *ultra philanthropists*, whenever they sin so grossly. I have not yet been able to explain why such hideous depravities were in some measure privileged; perhaps there existed a sect who, to detach itself from the world on the one hand, and to withhold itself from its most delicious influences, had sworn hatred to the loveliest half of the human species; perhaps, like the society of *bonnes lettres*, and that of *bonnes études*, they formed a society of *bonnes mœurs*—jesuitical manners. I know nothing of it, but in a few years the crime has made so much progress that I counsel our ladies to be on their guard; if it continue, farewell to the empire of the petticoat, the long or short gown; the jesuits only love their own.

I have generally found that amongst the members composing the brigade, those who went heart and hand into its duties became at length tolerable members of society, that is to say, that leaving one trade to enter upon another, they pursued their path steadily. Those, on the contrary, who did not go readily to work, fell into irregular habits, which invariably led to an unhappy termination. I had particularly occasion to make an observation of this nature with reference to a man named Desplanques, who was my secretary.

This Desplanques was a well-bred young fellow; he had talent, good style in writing, was a fine penman, and had several other qualifications which might have led him to an honourable rank in the world. Unfortunately he had an addiction to robbery, and to perfect his disgrace he was most superlatively idle. He was a robber with the soul of a pick-pocket, which is tantamount to saying, that he was unfitting for anything requiring assiduity and energy. As he was not punctual, and acquitted himself very ill in his department, it happened that I frequently scolded him: "You are always complaining of my negligence," he replied, "with you one must be a slave: on my faith, I am

not accustomed to be so used." Desplanques had just left the Bagne, where he had passed six years.

In admitting him into the brigade, I thought I had made an admirable acquisition, but I was not slow in being convinced that he was incorrigible, and I found myself compelled to dismiss him. Being then without resource, he betook himself to the only mode of existence which in such a situation can be reconciled with the love of ease. Passing one evening through the Rue du Bac, he broke a square of glass in a money changer's shop, and ran off with a wooden bowl full of money. At the same moment he heard a cry of "stop thief," and was warmly pursued. At the words "stop, stop," officiously repeated from all quarters, Desplanques redoubled his speed, and would soon have been out of reach, but at a turning in the street, he fell completely into the arms of two agents, his old comrades: the rencontre was fatal. He tried to escape, but his efforts were useless; the agents fastened on him and dragged him to the commissary, where the positive commission was immediately sworn to. Desplanques was an old offender, and condemned to the galleys for life: he is now at Toulon, where he is undergoing his sentence.

People who judge of all without having any knowledge of individual facts, have asserted that agents who have been originally robbers, must, necessarily, have an understanding with them, or at least temporize with them as long as they are sufficiently adroit as not to expose themselves. I can attest that robbers have no more cruel enemies than the freed convicts who have assembled under the banner of the police; and that they, following the usual examples in such cases, never exert more zeal than when they are serving a friend; that is to say, seeking to apprehend an ex-comrade. In general, a robber who thinks himself reformed is without pity for his ancient comrades; the more he has been intrepid in his time, the more implacable he will be.

One day, Cerf, Macolein, and Dorlé were brought

to the bureau charged with robbery. On seeing them, Coco-Lacour, who had long been their companion and intimate friend, was apparently overpowered with indignation ; he rose and apostrophized Dorlé in these terms.

LACOUR. Well, sir, what are you still incorrigible ?

DORLE. I do not understand you, M. Coco, with your morality !

LACOUR (*in a rage.*) Who do you call Coco ? Learn that that name is not mine ; I call myself Lacour ; yes, Lacour, do you hear ?

DORLE. Ah ! my God ! I know it too well, you are Lacour ; but you have not, I dare say, forgotten that when we were comrades you had no other name but Coco, and all the *friends* you have call you by that name, and no other. I say, Cerf, have you ever seen a *cocoa* of such strength ?

CERF (*shrugging his shoulders.*) There are no children left, all the world is mingled, monsieur Lacour !

LACOUR. It is good, good, very good, other times, other manners ; *castigat ridendo mores* ; I know that in my youth I may have committed some little venial offences, but ———

Lacour tried to arrange some words, in which the word *honour* was distinguishable ; but Dorlé who was not in a humour to listen to his remonstrance, closed his mouth by recalling to him all the various times when they had *worked* together. A thousand times Lacour has experienced disagreeables of this kind : and if ever he reproached the robbers with their tenacity for *sticking to business*, his good intentions were always recompensed by similar impertinences.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

God bless you!—The conciliabules—The inheritance of Alexander—The rumours and prophecies—Grand conspiracy—Inquiry—Discoveries on the subject of a *Monseigneur le dauphin*—I am innocent—The fable often reproduced—The Plutarch of the literary pillar, and Tiger the printer—The wonderful and well-authenticated history of the famous Vidocq—His death in 1875.

ONCE attaining the post of chief of the police of safety, I no longer cared for the snares with which they so often sought to encompass me. The time of trial was past; but still I was compelled to keep on my guard against the base jealousies of some of my subalterns, who envied my appointment, and did their utmost to endeavour to supplant me. Coco-Lacour was a leader amongst the malcontents, who endeavoured to caress and injure me at the same time. At the moment when this rogue was at fifty paces from me and would have overturned all the chairs in a church to come and salute me with a honeyed "*God bless you,*" when, by chance he heard me sneeze, I was well assured that he was a snake in the grass. No one despises more than myself those petty attentions of a man who is servile, even when civility is scarcely requisite. But as I had a conscience which told me that I had done my duty, I cared very little as to whether these demonstrations were false or true. Scarcely a day passed without my spies informing me that Lacour was the soul of certain meetings, (*conciliabules*,) where all matters relating to me were discussed. They said that he projected my downfall; that there was a party formed against me, the aim of whose conspiracy was to destroy the tyrant Vidocq. At first, the conspirators contented themselves with clamours; and as they had my destruction perpetually in perspective, that they might mutually please each other, they universally predicted it, and each of

them partook beforehand of the inheritance of Alexander. I am ignorant whether the inheritance devolved on "the most *worthy*," but I know very well that my successor did not hesitate to have recourse to every stratagem, more or less skilful, to succeed in getting it adjudged to him previously to my abdication.

From clamours and scandal-meetings Lacour and his partisans passed to more decided measures ; and on the approach of the sitting, during which Peyois, Leblanc, Berthelet, and Lefebvre, who were accused of robbery; by the aid of a crow-bar, or monseigneur le dauphin, they spread a report that I was on the eve of a catastrophe, and that, in all probability, I should not get off with clean hands.

This prophecy, delivered at all the vintners in the environs of the palace of justice, was soon brought to me, but I did not disquiet myself any more than at so many others which were not realized ; only, I thought I perceived that Lacour redoubled his attentions and suppleness towards me ; he saluted me more respectfully and with more ceremony than usual ; his eyes, aided by the spiral movement of his head, when he sought to give himself the graces of a man of good breeding, sedulously avoided all contact with mine. At the same time, I remarked with three other of my agents, Chrestien, Utinet, and Decostard, an increase of zeal for the service, and a complaisance which astonished me. I was instructed that these gentlemen had frequent conferences with Lacour ; as for myself, without thinking the least in the world of watching their steps for my personal interest, I had surprised them chattering and talking of me. One evening, particularly, passing into the court of la Sainte-Chapelle, (for they had plotted even in the sanctuary,) I had heard one of them rejoicing that I should not *parry the thrust about to be made at me*. What did this mean ? I had not the least idea. When Peyois and his accomplices had been tried, the judicial examination developed a most atrocious machination, tending to

prove that I was the instigator of the crime which had led them to the galleys.

Peyois said, "that having addressed me, to ask me if I knew a recruiter who wanted a substitute, I had proposed that he should rob on my account, and that I had even given him three francs to buy the crow-bar, with which he had been taken when forcibly entering the house of *Sieur Labatty*." *Berthelet* and *Lefebvre* confirmed *Peyois's* statement; and a vintner named *Leblanc* who, implicated as well as they, appeared to have been the real provider of funds for procuring the instrument, encouraged them to persevere in a system of defence, which, if allowed, would have the effect of clearing him. The advocates who pleaded in this cause, did not fail to draw all possible argument from this imputation against me, and as they spoke from conviction, if they did not determine the jury to come to a decision favourable to their clients, at least they contrived to insinuate into the minds of the judges and the public most terrible prejudices against me. I therefore felt it incumbent on me to exculpate myself, and, sure of my innocence, I begged *M. the préfet* of police to grant me an inquiry, that the truth might be made evident.

Peyois, *Berthelet*, and *Lefebvre* were condemned, and I imagined that not having henceforward any motive for persisting in falsehood, they would confess that they had calumniated me; I presumed, besides, that in case their conduct should have been the result of suggestion, they would not make much difficulty in naming the advisers of the imposture which they had so impudently supported in the presence of justice. The *préfet* allowed the inquiry I solicited, and at the moment when he confided the care of directing it to *M. Fleuriais*, commissary of police for that quarter of the city, a previous document, on which I had not counted, preceded my justification; it was a letter of *Berthelet* to the vintner *Leblanc*, who had been declared not guilty; I transcribe it here, because it shows to what are reduced the accusations which were perpetually made

against me, the whole time I was attached to the police, and since I have belonged to it. It follows, and I have preserved even the exact orthography.

“ A MONSIEUR,

“ Monsieur *le Blanc*, maître marchand de vin, demeurant barrière du Combat, boulevard de la Chopinette, au signe de la Crois, à proche Paris.

“ Monsieur, je vous Ecris cette lettre Cest pour m'enformer de l'état de votre santé Et an même teimps pour vous prevenir que nous sommes pourvus an grace de notre jugement. Vous ne doutez pas de ma malheureuse position. C'est pourquoi que je vous previens que si vous m'abandonné je ferais de nouvelle Revelation de la peince que vous avez fourny et qui a deplus été trouvée chez vous, dont vous n'ignorez pas ce que nous avons caché a la justice a cette Egard, et dont un chef de la police a été cités dans cette affaire qui était innocent Et qu'on a cherché a rendre victime, vous n'ignorez pas les promesse que vous m'aves faite dans votre chambre pour vous soutenir dans le tribunal, vous n'ignorez pas que j'ai vendu le suc et de la chandelle a votre femme C'est pourquoi si vous m'abandonne je ne vous regarderai pas pour un nomme dapres toutes vos belles promesses.

“ Rappelez vous que la justice ne pert pas ces droit et qui je pourés vous faire appellees en —————

“ Vous navés Rien à craindre cette a passer secretement.

“ BERTHELET.”

And lower down, “ j'approuve l'ecriture ci desus.”

(TRANSLATION.)

“ To MONSIEUR,

“ Monsieur *le Blanc*, master vintner, living at the barriere du Combat, boulevard de la Chopinette, at the sign of the Cross, near Paris.

“ SIR,

“ I write you this letter to inform myself of the state

of your health, and, at the same time, to let you know that we are about to seek a reversal of our sentence. You cannot doubt my wretched situation. I therefore warn you that if you forsake me, I will make a fresh discovery of the crow-bar which you furnished, and which has been found at your house, which you well know we have not told to justice, and with which a chief of police has been charged in this affair, who is entirely innocent, and who has been singled out as a victim; you are not ignorant of the promises that you made in your room, on condition that we supported you before the tribunal; you are not ignorant that I sold the sugar and candles to your wife, and, therefore, if you abandon me, I shall think no more of you and your fine promises.

“Remember that justice will not lose her rights, and that I can have you summoned to ———.”

“You have nothing to fear, this passes out secretly.

“BERTHELET.”

“I approve the above.”

According to custom, this letter, which was to pass so secretly, was given up to the jailor, who, having read it, forwarded it to the prefecture of police. Leblanc, consequently, being unable to reply or come to Berthelet, he lost his patience, and to put in execution the menaces he had held out, he wrote to me from the Conciergerie another letter thus conceived:—

“*Ce 29 Septembre, 1823.*

“MONSIEUR,

“Dapres les debats de la cour d’assise et le resumée du president qui porte a charge Dapres la Declaration du Nommé Peyois qui par une Fosse declaration faite par lui au tribunal d’un Ecul de 3 fr. que vous lui aviez donnés pour acheté linstrument qui a Casses la porte a Monsieur Labbaty.

“Moi Berthelet En presence des autorités veux

faire Reconnoître la veritée Et votre innocence je declare 1°. savoir ou la peince a été achetée. 2°. de la maison dou elle est sorty. 3°. et le nom de celui qui la fourny avec veritée.

“ BERTHELET.”

And lower down, “ J’approuve lecriture ci Dessus.”

Still lower, the seal of the house of justice and the notice from the hand of the chief of the employés of the Conciergerie.

“ *L’écriture ci-dessus et la signature est celle de Berthelet.* ”

“ EGLY.”

(TRANSLATION.)

“ 29th September, 1823.

“ SIR,

“ After the examination of the Court of Assize and the sentence of the president after the declaration of Peyois, who, by a false declaration made by him at the tribunal, of a three franc piece that you had given him, to buy the instrument which broke open M. Labatty’s door.

“ I, Berthelet, in presence of the authorities, wish to confess the truth and your innocence. I declare, *first*, when the crow-bar was bought; *secondly*, the house whence it came; *thirdly*, the name of him who furnished it, with truth.

“ BERTHELET.”

“ I approve the above.”

Berthelet, being interrogated by M. Fleuriais, declared that the crow-bar had cost forty-five sous; that it was bought at the faubourg du temple, at a broker’s, and that Leblanc, knowing the use to which it was to be applied, had advanced the money to pay for it. “ The bargain concluded,” continued Berthelet, “ Leblanc, who was a little behind, said to me; “ If any person should ask you what you are going to do with the crow-bar, you must say that you are a stone-cutter, and that you want the

bar to work your turning-wheel. If they ask for your papers, come to me, and I will say that you are my apprentice." I went on with the crow-bar in my hand, and he told me to give it to him, that he might carry it under his great coat, lest I should meet any of the agents. Leblanc then conducted me to his house, and on arriving, his first care was to go down into his cellar to hide the crow-bar. I went up stairs and found Lefebvre there, to whom I said that I had bought the tool. The same evening, after having sat drinking till ten o'clock, Lefebvre, Peyois, and myself went round the temple to a small street, the name of which I forget; Peyois, whilst I and Lefebvre were on the watch, made thirty-three holes by means of a centre-bit, in the shutter of a milliner's shop. The knife he used to enlarge the holes having broken, and our attempt thus failing, we retired, and went then to the market at the corner of St. Eustache, when Peyois, using the crow-bar, tried to force the door of a silk-mercier. Some one within having asked what we wanted, we fled; it was then half-past two o'clock in the morning. We went all then to the hôtel d'Angleterre, when Perjois left with the woman of the house, whom he knew, an umbrella which he had with him.

"Before he entered, Peyois had left the crow-bar, which was wrapped up, with a coffee-seller in the street. We left the hôtel d'Angleterre about five o'clock, and Peyois again took the bar from the woman in whose charge he had left it. I must say that woman knew nothing of what it was. Peyois went then to Leblanc's, and carried the bar with him. Lefebvre and I did not part company, but returned to Leblanc's at five o'clock in the evening, and remained there till tea. Leblanc gave me a phosphorus light-box in case we should need one, and also a piece of candle. I amused myself with tracing on this light-box, which was of lead, with my knife, the letter L, which is Leblanc's initial. Peyois, Lefebvre, and I went out together. Peyois, having taken the bar with him, passed the bar-

rier with it, and then left it with us. He stopped on the road, to call at a house with Victoire Bigan, and Lefebvre and I went to commit (at Labatty's) the robbery for which we were subsequently apprehended. The crow-bar and a part of the booty stolen were conveyed to Leblanc's by Lefebvre.

"Leblanc, who was tried with us, had engaged us not to accuse him, and not to contradict Peyois, who was to say that it was M. Vidocq who had given him three francs to buy the crow-bar; and he has promised to give me a sum of money if I would consent to assert the same thing. I did consent, fearing that if I told the truth my situation would be still worse."

(Declaration of 3d October, 1823.)

Lefebvre, who afterwards confessed, without having any communication with Berthelet, confirmed his confession, as far as concerned Leblanc. "If I did not say," he added, "that it was he who furnished Berthelet with the money for the purchase of the crow-bar, it is because Peyois had engaged me to say that it was he, Peyois, who had bought it. Peyois being compromised in this robbery, was unwilling to charge Leblanc, who was friendly to him and would serve him again." A Monsieur Egly, chief of the employés at the Conciergerie, and Lecomte and Vermont, confined in that prison, having been heard by M. Fleuriais, related many conversations, in which Berthelet, Lefebvre, and Peyois had arranged, in their presence, how they would inculcate me. In their evidence all the convicts agreed that I had endeavoured to dissuade them from doing wrong. Vermont related, besides, that one day he having blamed them because they had compromised me without any motive, they replied: "Stuff! we will do the trick; we would have compromised the eternal Father to save ourselves; but it has not turned out so well as might be."

Peyois, who was the youngest of the party, was less free in his replies: his friendship for Leblanc induced

him to conceal a part of the affair, but he confessed that I knew nothing of the purchase of the crow-bar.

"During," said he, "all the time that preceded our trial, and before the court of assizes, I have affirmed and declared that M. Vidocq gave me the three francs to buy the crow-bar, by the aid of which the robbery has been committed, which caused the apprehension of myself, Berthelet, Leblanc, Lefebvre, and others. I have persisted in saying the same thing, hoping that it might defer or diminish my term of sentence. I had thought of this plan because some prisoners had told me that it might be of use to me. I will now truly declare that M. Vidocq gave me no money to buy the crow-bar, and I purchased it with my own money: this bar cost me forty-eight sous, and I bought it at a smith's shop in the first street on the right hand, on entering the Rue des Arcis on the side of the bridge of Notre-Dame. I do not know the name of the smith, but I could easily point out the shop, which is the second on the right on going down the street. It was on the eighth or ninth of March last that I made the purchase; the smith and his wife were in the shop; it was the first time I ever bought any thing of them."

Three days afterwards Peyois, having been transferred to Bicêtre, wrote to the chief of the second division of the prefecture of police a letter, in which he confessed that he had constantly imposed on justice, and testified a wish to make sincere disclosures: this time the whole truth did really come to light. Utinet, Chrestien, Decostard, and Coco-Lacour, who had come to the court to depose in favour of the imposture, were at once dragged to light: it became evident that Chrestien had planned the whole intrigue, which was to lead to my expulsion from the police. A declaration which the mayor of Gentilly received, exposed the whole infamy of the machination, from which Lacour, Chrestien, Decostard, and Utinet, had promised themselves the greatest success. This declaration, to which I could add a great many

others, comprises a complete justification, and I here subjoin it word for word.

DECLARATION

Of Peyois and Lefebvre, relative to Sieur Vidocq, falsely accused of having furnished money to buy a crow-bar, by help of which a robbery was committed.

"Second Division, First Office, No. 70,466.

"This day, the 13th of October, 1823, at ten o'clock in the morning, we, Guillaume Recodere, mayor of the commune of Gentilly, after the order of M. the councillor of state, préfet of police, we went to the central house of detention of Bicêtre, when we caused to appear before us, in the room of the said prison, André Peyois, detained under a sentence condemning him to confinement in irons, whom, after having presented a letter addressed to the chief of the second division of the prefecture of police, beginning with these words, '*pardon the liberty,*' and finishing with these, '*of which my mother has informed me,*' the said letter, dated the tenth current, and signed Peyois, we asked to tell us if he knew it to be that which he had subscribed and signed, and if he avowed the whole contents.

"His reply was, that he perfectly knew this letter to be the same which he addressed to M. Parisot, chief of the second division of the prefecture of police, it was signed by him. The body of the letter was not written by him, as he could not write well enough for that, but that what it contained had been dictated by him to the writer, (named Lemaitre, a fellow-prisoner,) and as a proof of what he stated, he is ready to declare to us orally all the facts and circumstances contained in the same, without requiring to have his memory assisted by any hints from us, by reading its contents: he, consequently, declared, that after the affair which led to his condemnation and sentence to fetters, when he publicly stated that the Sieur Vidocq had given him the sum of three francs to buy the crow bar, by aid of which he committed the robbery which led to his condemnation'

he told a thing not only incorrect but actually untrue, for no such offer or suggestion was made to him by that functionary, and that never, at this or any other time, did he receive money from this individual: he stated this falsehood in public court; he did it from the bad advice given to him by Utinet and Chrestien, who persuaded him that by this means only his affair would take a favourable turn, and that he would not be condemned; and so much the more, as if he called on them as witnesses of what he stated they would support his assertion, and they would depose exactly as he did, and that they would even say that they had seen the sum of three francs given; they went even further, they persuaded him that they had much influence with some powerful personage whose authority would secure him from condemnation, or, if a sentence was past, would exercise his influence in reversing his judgment.

"It was also by the advice of these two individuals that he called Lacour and Decostard as witnesses, who deposed the same facts as himself, declaring that *Sieur Vidocq* had done so, although such statement was positively false.

"After his sentence these same individuals required of him that he should appeal, promising to pay the expenses of a counsel and all the costs of such appeal. As to the latter circumstance, the mother may be examined who received from Lacour and Decostard the same promises and same advances: they were made to her at a vintner's, in the place du Palais de Justice, named M. Bazile. His mother lives with her husband, Rue du Faubourg Saint Denis, No. 143, at a M. Restauret's.

"Thus he must, for the satisfaction of his conscience, and to pay homage to justice and truth, disavow what he said in open court to the prejudice of *Sieur Vidocq*, against his morality and his honour, and he humbly asks his pardon.

"To corroborate this confession he requests us to examine Lefebvre, his accomplice, sentenced with him-

self in the same affair, who is in this prison, and knows by whom and with whose money the crow-bar was bought, which he said had been paid for by the money of Vidocq.

"This was read over to him, and he confirms the truth of it, in which he persists, and has signed it.

(Signed) "PEYOIS."

"Afterwards, having summoned before us Lefebvre, who was above alluded to as a prisoner in the same prison, we asked him if he knew Peyois, and how he procured the crow-bar, by the aid of which the robbery was effected, which led to their mutual conviction.

"He answered, that two or three days before the robbery was committed he had seen this instrument in the hands of Peyois, who, before the affair, had always told him that he bought it for three francs, but never said that M. Vidocq had given him the money. It was on the trial, and during the arraignment previously, that he learnt that it was M. Vidocq who had supplied the funds which bought it.

"Which is all he knew of the matter, and his declaration being read over to him, he said that it was all true, he persisted in the assertion, and signed it.

(Signed) "LEFEBVRE."

"From which, and of all which, the present *procès verbal* has been drawn, to be transmitted to M. the councillor of state, préfet of police, on the day, month, and year, above-mentioned.

(Signed) "RECODERE."

It was these four agents (Lacour, Chrestien, Decostard and Utinet) who had sent Peyois to me, when he came under pretence of asking me if I could not tell him of some recruits who wanted a substitute: it was also they who persuaded Berthelet to come to my office, to give me information on a certain robbery about to be perpetrated. They had thus prepared to support the accusation, under the weight of which they hoped to

crush me, an assemblage of apparent truths resulting from my intercourse with robbers previously to their apprehension. According to all appearances it was not impossible but that they had, for some time, winked at the exploits of Peyois and his gang, on condition that if they were apprehended in the act, they should adopt a system of defence conformable to their interest. Not a trace of such an understanding could be made out, but it is most probable; and the measures of my agents, both during the proceedings and after the conviction of the culprits, do not allow any doubt on the point. Peyois is arrested, and instantly Utinet and Chrestien go to La Force and have a conversation with him, in which they persuade him that it is only by accusing me that he can give a favourable turn to his affair: that if he would escape a sentence he must call them both as witnesses of what they agreed that he should assert: that they will support his assertion, and will depose exactly the same as he did: that they will even state that they have seen me give him the sum of three francs.

The two agents do not confine themselves to this only; but to make assurance doubly sure of the non retraction of Peyois, they tell him that they have a powerful protector at their disposal, whose influence will preserve them from every kind of sentence, and who, if by chance a sentence was inevitable, would still have arms long enough to overturn the sentence.

The pleadings opened, Utinet, Chrestien, Lacour, and Decostard hastened to attest the facts which were imputed to me by Peyois. But this young man, to whom they promised impunity, was overwhelmed by the verdict: then apprehending that, now seeing his fate, he would make them repent having deceived him, by exposing their treachery, they hastened to animate his hope, and not only required of him that he should appeal to the court of cassation, but, still more, they offered to give him a counsel at their own expense, and engaged to pay all expenses of the appeal. The mother of Peyois was equally assailed by these intrigues:

they made her the same offers of service, the same promises ; Lacour, Decostard, and Chrestien took her to M. Bazile's, the vintner's, place du Palais de Justice ; and there, in the presence of Leblanc's wife and a bottle of wine, exerted all their eloquence to prove to the mother of Peyois that if she seconded them, and her son was obedient to their orders, it would be easy to save him : " Be quiet," said Chrestien, " and we will do all that is requisite."

Such were the facts elucidated by the inquiry ; it became evident to the magistrates that the incident of the crow-bar furnished by Vidocq was an invention of my agents ; and, subsequently, on this foundation, a thousand and one tales were made more or less ridiculous ; which the Plutarchs of the literary pillar will not fail to give as authentic, if ever Tiger, the printer, or his successor, should take a fancy to add to their collection of wonderful books, "*The wonderful, but yet most true history of the deeds, actions, and adventures, memorable, extraordinary, and surprising, of the celebrated Vidocq ; with a portrait of that great spy, as he appeared when living, just before his death, which happened without accident, on the day of his decease, in his house at Saint Mandé, at midnight, on the 22d July, in the year of grace, 1875.*"

CHAPTER XXXV.

The newsmongers of mishaps—The echo of the street of Jerusalem and the circumjacent places—Nothing but “Vidocq”—The Athenians and Aristides—Ostracism and shells—The cat’s-paw—I create robbers—The two Guillotins—The cloaca of Desnoyers—Chaos and creation—Monsieur Double-croche and the chicken-coop—A genteel appearance—The supreme bon ton—War with the greenhorns—Le Cadran bleu de la Canaille—A well-compacted society—The Orientalists and the Argonauts—The mutton of the salt-marshes—The cat’s tail—The quids and the Chahut—Riboulet and Manon la Blonde—The triumphal entry—The little black father—Two ballads—Hospitality—The college friend—The Children of the Sun.

I ASK pardon of the reader for having expatiated at so much length on my own tribulations and the petty spite of my agents: I could well desire to have spared him a chapter which only concerns my reputation; but, before I proceeded, I was anxious to show that it is not always right to give ear to the tales of enemies. What have not the spies, the robbers, and the pick-pockets endeavoured by every means in their power, as well as many others, to get me dismissed from the police?

“Such a one is *grabbed*,” said a knight of the post to his wife, on returning at evening to his lair.

“Impossible!”

“No, by heaven ‘tis as I tell you.”

“By whom?”

“Why need you ask? by that —— Vidocq.”

Two of those gossips so numerous on the *pavé* of Paris meet;—

“Have you heard the news? Poor Harrison is at La Force.”

“Monsieur, you are joking.”

“I wish it was a joke; he was just ready to receive a quantity of merchandise. I should have had my

commission; well! the devil mingled in the dance, just as he had received the notice of delivery he was apprehended."

"And by whom?"

"By Vidocq."

"The wretch!"

A capture of the highest importance was announced at the police-office; If I had seized any great criminal, of whom the most cunning agents had a hundred times lost scent, instantly all the flies began buzzing, "It is that cursed Vidocq who has *nabbed* him at last." It was then that recrimination followed recrimination without end: along the streets of Jerusalem and Sainte-Anne, from cabaret to cabaret, echo repeated in the accents of malice, "Vidocq again! always Vidocq!" and this name sounded more harshly in the ears of the cabal, than did that of the Just on the ears of the ancient Athenians, as applied to Aristides.

How great would have been the happiness of the gangs of robbers, vagabonds, and spies, if, expressly to offer them a chance of getting rid of me, they had revived the old law of Ostracism! How shells would then have accumulated! But, except by plots like those from which M. Coco and his accomplices expected so fortunate a result, what could they do? In the hive they silenced the drones. "Look at Vidocq," said the chief, "take example from him; what activity he exerts! always on the alert, day and night, he never sleeps; with four such men as he, the safety of the capital would be ensured."

These encomiums irritated the sluggards, but they did not follow the advice given: if they were awake, they always had a glass in their hands; and instead of going on wings to the place where duty summoned, they formed themselves into small parties, and amused themselves by picking my coat to pieces.

"No, it is not possible," said one, "to take these expert *cracksmen*, unless he has some understanding with them."

"Parbleu!" replied another, "he sets them on, and makes a cat's-paw ——"

"Oh, he is a malicious brute," added a third.

Then a fourth, placing a copestone upon the whole, cried out with a stentorian voice, "When there are no robbers, he makes them."

Now, see how I made robbers.

I do not think that amongst the readers of these Memoirs one will be found who, even by chance, has set foot at Guillotin's.

"Eh! what?" some one will exclaim, "Guillotin!"

Ce savant médecin
Que l'amour du prochain
Fit mourir de chagrin.

"You are mistaken, we all know the celebrated doctor, who——;" but the Guillotin of whom I am speaking is an unsophisticated adulterator of wines, whose establishment, well known to the most degraded classes of robbers, is situate opposite to the Cloaque Desnoyers, which the raff of the Barrière call the drawing-room of la Courtille. A workman may be honest to a certain extent and venture in, *en passant*, to papa Desnoyers'. If he be *awake*, and keep his eye on the company, although a row should commence, he may, by the aid of the gendarmes, escape with only a few blows, and pay no one's scot but his own. At Guillotin's he will not come off so well, particularly if his *toggery* be over spruce, and his *pouch* has *chink* in it.

Picture to yourself, reader, a square room of considerable magnitude, the walls of which, once white, have been blackened by every species of exhalation. Such is, in all its simple modesty, the aspect of a temple consecrated to the worship of Bacchus and Terpsichore. At first, by a very natural optical illusion, we are struck by the confined space before us, but the eye, after a time, piercing through the thick atmosphere of a thousand vapours which are most inodorous, the extent becomes visible by details which escape in the

first chaotic glimpse. It is the moment of creation, all is bright, the fog disappears, becomes peopled, is animated, forms appear, they move, they are agitated, they are no illusory shadows, but, on the contrary, essentially material, which cross and recross at every moment. What beatitudes! what a joyous life! Never, even for the Epicureans, were so many felicities assembled together. Those who like to wallow in filth, can find it here to their heart's content: many seated at tables, on which, without ever being wiped away, are renewed a hundred times a day the most disgusting libations, close in a square space reserved for what they call the dancers. At the further end of this infected cave there is, supported by four worm-eaten pillars, a sort of alcove, constructed from broken-up ship-timber, which is graced by the appearance of two or three rags of old tapestry. It is on this chicken coop that the music is perched: two clarinets, a hurdy-gurdy, a cracked trumpet, and a grumbling bassoon—five instruments whose harmonious movements are regulated by the crutch of Monsieur Double-Croche, a lame dwarf, who is called the leader of the orchestra. Here all is in harmony—the faces, costumes, the food that is prepared; a genteel appearance is scouted. There is no closet in which walking-sticks, umbrellas, and cloaks are deposited; the women have their hair all in confusion like a poodle dog, and the kerchief perched on the top of the head, or in a knot tied in front, with the corners in a rosette, or, if you prefer it, a cockade, which threatens the eye in the same manner as those of the country mules. As for the men, it is a waistcoat with a cap and falling collar, if they have a shirt, which is the regulated costume; breeches are not insisted on; the supreme *bon ton* would be an artilleryman's cap, the frock of an hussar, the pantaloons of a lancer, the boots of a guardsman, in fact the cast-off attire of three or four regiments, or the wardrobe of a field of battle; and there is *no out and outer* thus attired but is the *fancy man* of these ladies, who

adore the cavalry, and have a decided taste for the dress of the whole army ; but nothing so much pleases them as mustachios, and a broad red cap adorned with leather of the same colour.

In this assembly, a beaver hat, unless napless and brimless, would be very rare ; no one ever remembers to have seen a coat there, and should any one dare to present himself in a great coat, unless *a family man*, he would be sure to depart skirtless, or only in his waistcoat. In vain would he ask pardon for those flaps which had offended the eyes of the noble assembly ; too happy would he be if, after having been bandied and knocked about with the utmost unanimity as a greenhorn, only one skirt should be left in the hands of these youthful beauties, who, in the fervour of gaiety, rather roar out than sing these characteristic words :—

Laissez-moi donc, j'veux m'en aller

Tout débiné z'a la Courtille.

Laissez-moi donc, j'veux m'en aller

Tout débiné chez Desnoyers !

Desnoyers' is the *Cadran bleu de la Canaille*, (the resort of the lower orders ;) but before stepping over the threshold of the cabaret of Guillotin, even the canaille themselves look twice, as in this repository are only to be seen prostitutes with their bullies, pick-pockets and thieves of all classes, some *prigs* of the lowest grade, and many of those nocturnal marauders who divide their existence into two parts, consecrating it to the duties of theft and riot. It may be supposed that slang is the only language of this delightful society : it is generally in French, but so perverted from its primitive signification, that there is not a member of the distinguished “ company of forty ” who can flatter himself with a full knowledge of it, and yet the “ dons of Guillotin's ” have their purists : those who assert that slang took its rise in the East, and without thinking for a moment of disputing their talent as Orientalists, they take that title to themselves without any ceremony.

as also that of Argonauts, when they have completed their studies under the direction of the galley-serjeants, in working, in the port of Toulon, the dormant navigation on board a vessel in dock. If notes were pleasing to me, I could here seize the opportunity of making some very learned remarks. I should, perhaps, go into a profound disquisition, but I am about to paint the paradise of these bacchanalians; the colours are prepared,—let us finish the picture.

If they drink at Guillotin's they eat also, and the mysteries of the kitchen of this place of delights are well worthy of being known. The little father Guillotin has no butcher, but he has a purveyor; and in his brass stewpans, the verdigrise of which never poisons, the dead horse is transformed into beef à-la-mode; the thighs of the dead dogs found in Rue Guénegaud become legs of mutton from the salt-marshes; and the magic of a piquant sauce gives to the *staggering bob* (dead born veal) of the cow-feeder the appetizing look of that of Pontoise. We are told that the cheer in winter is excellent, when the rot prevails; and if ever (during M. Delaveau's administration) bread were scarce in summer during the "massacre of the innocents," mutton was to be had here at a very cheap rate.

In this country of metamorphoses the hare never had the right of citizenship; it was compelled to yield to the rabbit, and the rabbit—how happy the rats are!

"O fortunati nimium—si nōrint."

It was the Domine of St. Mandé who taught me this quotation; he told me it was Latin, perhaps it may be Greek or Hebrew;—no matter, I leave it, come what may, to the will of God; but still, if the rats could ever have seen what I have seen, unless they had been an ingrate and perverse race, they would have opened a subscription for the erection of a statue to the *Liberator*, little father Guillotin.

One evening, led by my inclination, which a good

Frenchman always follows, I went out ; in my road I accidentally pushed against a door, it gave way, and, by the freshness of the air, I found I was in a court ; the place was propitious, and I groped along, until I made a trip over some paving stones which had been left in the way. I stretched out my arms to recover myself, and whilst with one hand I grasped hold of a post, I seized with the other something very soft and very long. I was in darkness, but fancied I saw several sparks shining, and by the touch I thought I recognised a certain velvet appendage of a quadruped's vertebral column. I kept hold of a bunch of it, and drawing it through my hand, there remained a packet of spoils, with which I entered the room at the very moment when M. Double-Croche, pointing out the figures to the dancers, was howling out "*la queue du chat.*"

It needs not to be asked how very *à propos* this was ; there was throughout the assembly a general mewing, but it was only a joke ; the lovers of fricassee mewed like the rest, and, after having taken their caps off, they said, " Come on, here is the good stuff ! Covered by cat-skin, and fed on cats, we shall not soon be in want ; the mother of tom-cats is not yet dead."

Father Guillotin consumed generally more oil than cotton, but I can, nevertheless, affirm, that, in my time, some banquets have been spread at his cabaret, which, subtracting the liquids, could not have cost more at the *café Riche* or at *Grignon's*. I remember six individuals, named *Driancourt*, *Vilattes*, *Pitroux*, and three others, who found means to spend 166 francs there in one night. In fact, each of them had with him his favourite *bella*. The citizen no doubt pretty well fleeced them, but they did not complain, and that quarter of an hour which *Rabelais* had so much difficulty in passing, caused them no trouble ; they paid like *grandees*, without forgetting the waiter. I apprehended them whilst they were paying the bill, which they had not even taken the trouble of examining. Thieves are generous when they are caught " *i' the vein.*" They had just committed

many considerable robberies, which they are now repenting in the bagnes of France.

It can scarcely be believed that in the centre of civilization, there can exist a den so hideous as the cave of Guillotin; it must be seen, as I have seen it, to be believed. Men or women all smoked as they danced, the pipe passed from mouth to mouth, and the most refined gallantry that could be offered to the nymphs who came to this rendezvous, to display their graces in the postures and attitudes of the indecent Chahut, was, to offer them the *pruneau*, that is, the quid of tobacco, submitted or not, according to the degree of familiarity, to the test of a previous mastication. The peace-officers and inspectors were characters too greatly distinguished to appear amongst such an assemblage, they kept themselves most scrupulously aloof, to avoid so repugnant a contact; I myself was much disgusted with it, but at the same time was persuaded, that to discover and apprehend malefactors it would not do to wait until they should come and throw themselves into my arms; I therefore determined to seek them out, and that my searches might not be fruitless, I endeavoured to find out their haunts, and then, like a fisherman who has found a preserve, I cast my line out with a certainty of a bite. I did not lose my time in searching for a needle in a bottle of hay, as the saying is; when we lack water, it is useless to go to the source of a dried-up stream and wait for a shower of rain; but to quit all metaphor, and speak plainly,—the spy who really means to ferret out the robbers, ought, as much as possible, to dwell amongst them, that he may grasp at every opportunity which presents itself of drawing down upon their heads the sentence of the laws. Upon this principle I acted, and this caused my recruits to say that I made men robbers; I certainly have, in this way, made a vast many, particularly on my first connection with the police.

On a particular afternoon of the winter of 1811, I had a presentiment that a visit to Guillotin's would not be

without its results. Without being superstitious, I know not why, I have always followed these inspirations; I put my wardrobe in requisition, and, after having suited myself so as not to bear any appearance of being a greenhorn, I left my house with another secret agent, named Riboulet, *a downy cove*, (arsouille consommé,) whom all the houris of the *boozing ken* (quinche) claimed as their chevalier, as did also the milliners' girls, who considered him as a complete *kiddy*. For such an excursion, a woman was an indispensable portion of the baggage, and Riboulet had one who just suited us; she passed as his mistress, and was a common woman, called Manon la Blonde, on whom he assured me that reliance could be placed. In two seconds she rent her woollen stockings in twenty places, tore the edges of her red cloak, begrimed her shawl, trod her shoes down at heel, dishevelled her locks, and gave to the kerchief with which she graced her brows that indescribable appearance which was necessary. She was highly delighted with the character she had to perform.

Thus attired and prepared, we set out together, arm-in-arm, towards la Courtille. On reaching the cabaret, we seated ourselves at a table in the corner, that we might the more easily watch whatever should pass. Riboulet was one of those men whose very appearance commanded instant attention: he had not spoken nor had I, but yet we were instantly attended to.

"You see," said he, "the *cove* knows the time o'day, the *lush* (wine), meat, and salad."

I asked if we could not have a *matelote* of eels.

"Snakes," cried Manon, "do you want; *cag-mag* and *snivellers* (stinking meat and onions) would be as good."

I said no more, and we began to eat with as much appetite as if we had never been initiated into the mysteries of papa Guillotin's cookery.

During the repast, a noise at the door attracted our attention. It proceeded from some conquerors who made their triumphal entry: men and women six in

number, forming three couples of individuals whose "human face divine" was most tremendously disfigured: they all had scratched countenances and black eyes; by the bloody disorder of their attire, and the freshness of their dilapidations in face and garments, it was easy to perceive that they were the heroes of some spree, in which on both sides the quarrel had been decided by fisty-cuffs. They approached our table.

ONE OF THE HEROES. "By your leave, my trumps, is there room for us on this here seat?"

I. "We shall be squeezed a little, but never mind." (*making room.*)

RIBOULET (*addressing me.*) "Come, my covey, make room for the gentlemen."

MANON (*to the fresh arrivals.*) "Are these ladies with you?"

ONE OF THE HEROINES. "Vat is it you say? (*turning to her friends,*) vat does she say?"

HER PAL. "Hold your jaw, Titine, (Celestine,) the lady said nothing to affront you."

The whole party seated themselves.

A HERO. "Halloo! come here daddy Guillotin; a little black father, four year old, for eight mag" (A four quart jug for eight sous.)

GUILLOTIN. "Coming, coming."

THE WAITER (*with the jug in his hand.*) "Thirty-two mag, if you please."

"I'll give you two and thirty kicks of the —, you're chaffing us my rum 'un."

WAITER. "No, my knowing ones, but it's the custom, or, if you like, the way of this here house."

The wine was poured into all the glasses, and they also filled ours. "Excuse the liberty," said the Gany-mede of the party.

"Oh, there's no harm done," replied Riboulet.

"You know one politeness requires another."

"But you are too polite."

"Oh no, drink away, nunky pays for all."

"You are right, my boys, so push the wine about."

We did push it about, and so well that about ten o'clock in the evening all the sympathy left between us was manifested by protestations, sight being lost; and by those explosions of drunken tenderness which develop all the infirmities of the human heart.

When the hour of parting had arrived, our new acquaintances, and particularly the softer sex, were completely drunk. Riboulet and his mistress were only somewhat elevated, as well as myself; they had preserved their senses, but to appear all in unison we pretended to be so tipsy as to be unable to walk; formed into a phalanx, because in that way the gusts of wind are less to be feared, we left the theatre of our pleasures. Then, that we might neutralize, by the aid of a *chant* the reeling tendencies of our troop, Riboulet, with voice whose echoes vibrated in every court and alley began to sing, in the most finished slang of his time, one of those ballads with a chorus, which are as long as to-day and to-morrow.

En roulant de vergne en vergne *

Pour apprendre à goupiner, †

J'ai rencontre la mercandière, ‡

Lonfa malura dondaine,

Qui du pivois solisait, §

Lonfa malura dondé.

J'ai rencontré la mercandière,

Qui du pivois solisait.

Je lui jaspine en bigorne, ||

Lonfa malura dondaine,

Qu'as-tu donc à morfiller? ¶

Lonfa malura dondé.

Je lui jaspine en bigorne

Qu'as-tu donc à morfiller?

J'ai du chenu pivois sans lance **

Lonfa malura dondaine,

Et du lartou savonné, ††

Lonfa malura dondé.

* City to city.

† To work.

‡ The shopkeeper.

§ Sold wine.

|| I ask him in slang.

¶ To eat.

** Good wine without water.

†† White bread.

Ja'i du chenu pivois sans lance
 Et du larton savonné
 Une lourde, une tournante *
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Et un pieu pour roupiller †
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Une lourde, une tournante
 Et un pieu pour roupiller,
 J'enquille dans sa cambriole ‡
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Espérant de l'entifler §
 Lonfa malura dondé.

J'enquille dans sa cambriole
 Espérant de l'entifler
 Je rembroque au coin du rifle ¶
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Un messière qui pionçait. ¶
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Je rembroque au coin du rifle
 Un messière qui pionçait.
 J'ai sondé dans ses vallades, **
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Son carle j'ai pessigué ††
 Lonfa malura dondé.

J'ai sondé dans ses vallades,
 Son carle j'ai pessigué
 Son carle, aussi sa tocquante ††
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Et ses attaches de cé §§
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Son carle, aussi sa tocquante
 Et ses attaches de cé,

* A door and a key. † A bed to sleep upon. ‡ To enter her chamber.

§ To make myself agreeable to her.

¶ I observe in the corner of the room.

** Search his pockets.

†† His money and watch.

¶ A man lying asleep.

†† I took his money.

§§ His silver buckles.

Son coulant et sa montante *
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Et son combre galuché †
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Son coulant et sa montante
 Et son combre galuché,
 Son frusque, aussi sa lisette ‡
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Et ses tirants brodanchés §
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Son frusque, aussi sa lisette
 Et ses tirants brodanchés,
 Crompe, crompte, mercandière ¶
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Car nous nous serions bequillés ¶
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Crompte, crompte, mercandière,
 Car nous serions bequillés
 Sur la placarde de vergne **
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Il nous faudrait gambiller † †
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Sur la placarde de vergne
 Il nous faudrait gambiller
 Allumés de toutes ces largues ‡ ‡
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Et du trepe rassemblé § §
 Lonfa malura dondé.

Allumés de toutes ces largues
 Et du trepe rassemblé,
 Et de ces charlats bons drilles, |||
 Lonfa malura dondaine,
 Tous aboutant goupiner ¶ ¶
 Lonfa malura dondé.

* His chain and breeches.

† His coat and waistcoat.

‡ Take care of yourself, shopkeeper.

** On the Place de Ville.

‡ ‡ Looked at by all these women.

|| Thieves ; good fellows.

† Gold edged hat.

§ Embroidered stockings.

¶ Hanged.

† † To dance.

§ § People.

¶ ¶ All coming to rob.

Riboulet having been safely delivered of his fourteen couplets, Manon la Blonde was desirous of evincing the powers of her lungs. "Now for another!" said she; "attend to one I learnt at Lazarre; open your *listeners*, and repeat after me."

Un jour à la Croix-Rouge
Nous étions dix à douze.

(She interrupted herself with "just as we now are.")

Nous étions dix à douze
Tous grinchés de renom, *
Nous attendions la sorgue †
Voulant voisser des bogues ‡
Pour faire du billon. § (bis)

Partage ou non partage
Tout est à notre usage;
N'épargnons le poitou ||
Poissons avec adresse ¶
Messières et gonzeuses ***
Sans faire de regout. †† (bis)

Dessus le pont au change
Certain argent-de-change
Se scabait au charron, ††
J'engantai sa toquante §§
Ses attaches brillantes ||||
Avec ses billemonts. ¶¶ (bis)

Quand douze plombs crossent, ***
Ses pegres s'en retournant †††
Au .apis de Montron †††
Montron ouvre ta lourde, §§§
Si tu veux que j'aboule, |||||
Et piausse en ton bocsin. ¶¶¶ (bis)

* Thieves.	† Night.	‡ Watches.	§ Money.
Let us be cautious.	¶ Let us rob.	** Citizen and wife.	
†† Awaken suspicion.	‡‡ Cried "thief."	§§ I took his watch.	
His diamond buckles.		¶¶ His bank notes.	
*** Twelve o'clock strikes.		††† The thieves.	
††† At the cabaret.	§§§ Your door.	Give money.	
¶¶¶ Sleep at your house.			

Montron drogue à sa larque, *
 Bonnis-moi donc girofle †
 Qui sont ces pegres-là ? †
 Des grinchisseurs de bogues, §
 Esquinteur de boutoques, ||
 Les connobres tu pas ? ¶ (bis)

Et vite ma culbute ; **
 Quand je vois mon affure ††
 Je suis toujours paré ††
 Du plus grand cœur du monde
 Je vais à la profonde §§
 Pour vous donner du frais. (bis)

Mais déjà la patrarque, ¶
 Au clair de la moucharde, ¶¶
 Nous reluque de loin.***
 L'aventure est étrange,
 C'était l'argent-de-change
 Que suivait les roussins. ††† (bis)

A des fois l'on rigole †††
 Ou bien l'on pavillonne §§§
 Qu'on devrait lansquiner |||||
 Raille, griviers, et cognes ¶¶¶
 Nous ont pour la cigogne ****
 Tretons marrons paumés. †††† (bis)

This chorus, which we took up, as it were, from Manon's mouth, before she had finished uttering them, was repeated eight or ten times, in a manner which almost broke the windows of the house about us. After this burst of bacchanalian hilarity, the first fumes of wine, which are usually most potent, beginning somewhat to dissipate, we entered into conversation. The chapter of confidences, according to custom, opened

* Asks his wife.	† Say, my love.	‡ These thieves.
§ Watch stealers.	Burglars.	¶ Do you not know them?
** Breeches.	†† Profit.	‡‡ Ready.
Patrol.	¶¶ The moon.	*** Looks at us.
††† Spies.	‡‡‡ Laughs.	§§§ Jokes.
¶¶¶ Exempt, soldiers, and gendarmes.	**** Palace of justice.	To weep.
†††† Taken in the act.		

by interrogatories. I did not require to be much questioned, but went beyond the communications which they desired to know: a stranger in Paris, I had only known Riboulet in prison at Valenciennes, when he was sent back to his regiment as a deserter; he was a *college clum*, (a fellow-prisoner,) whom I had met again. As to the rest, I took care to represent myself in colours which charmed them: I was a thorough *out-and-outer* (sacripan fini.) I know not what I had not done, and was ready to do any thing. I unbosomed myself that they might unbosom as freely in their turn; it is a tactic which has often been successful with me: the party soon chattered like magpies, and I became as well acquainted with all their doings as if I had never been separated from them. They told me their names, residences, exploits, misfortunes, hopes; they had met a man who was really worthy of their confidence: I returned it, I suited them, and all was said.

Such explanations always make a man thirsty, more or less: all the liquor-shops in our road were visited: more than a hundred toasts were drank in honour of our new convention, and we were not to separate again. "Come along with us, come," they said, and they were so pressing, that, quite unable to refuse their importunities, I agreed to go to their abode, Rue des Filles-Dieu, No. 14, where they lodged in a furnished house. Once in their abode, it was impossible to refuse a share of their bed: it is difficult to describe what good fellows they were; and so was I, and they were the better convinced of it, as, during an hour, whilst I pretended to be sleeping, my friend Riboulet passed an eulogy on me, in a low tone of voice, of which not even half was true, or I should have richly merited a sentence for ten times the term of my natural life. I was not born coiffeur, like a certain personage whom the witty Figaro ridicules; I was born coiffé, and had the happiness of killing a generation of honest men with vexation. At last

Riboulet had so completely placed me in good odour with our hosts, that about break of day they proposed to me to go out upon a *job* with them, a robbery which they had planned in the Rue de la Verrerie.

I had only just time to warn the chief of the second division, who made his arrangements so well, that they were apprehended with the property about their persons. Riboulet and I remained on the look out, to give alarm in case of danger, as the thieves believed, but, in fact, to see if the police were on their posts. When they passed near us, all three in a coach, whence they could not see us, "Well!" said Riboulet, "there they are, like Manon's song, *tretons marrons paumés*," (taken in the very act.) They were also condemned, and if the names of Debuire, Rolé, and Hippolyte, called *la Biche*, are still on the muster-roll at the Bagnes, it is the result of an evening passed at Guillotin's amongst the children of the sun, (*aux enfants du soleil*.)

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A frequenter of la Petite Chaise—A room to rob—Father Masson's oranges—The heap of stones—No compromise—A nocturnal carrying off—The jolly thief—Every man to his liking—My first visit to Bicêtre—Down with Vidocq! Superb discourse—A matter of fear—The storm is appeased—They will not kill me.

THIEVES frequently fell into my clutches when I least expected them; it was said that their evil genius impelled them to come and find me. It must be confessed that those who thus flung themselves into the wolf's throat were horribly unlucky or infernally stupid. When I saw with what facility the majority of them gave themselves up, I was really astonished that they should have chosen a profession in which, to avoid perils, so many precautions are necessary: some of

them were such good-natured fellows, that I considered as almost miraculous the impunity which they had enjoyed up to the moment when they met me, and paid the reckoning of their crimes. It is incredible that any individuals created expressly to fall into any plot or snare, should have awaited my coming to the police to be caught. Before my time the police was either most clumsily arranged, or else I was singularly fortunate: under any circumstances it is, as they say, "give a man luck and fling him into the sea." The following recital is in point. One day, towards twilight, dressed like a workman of the dock-yards, I was seated on the parapet of the Quai de Gèvres, when I saw, coming towards me, an individual whom I knew to be one of the frequenters of the Petite Chaise and the Bon Puits, two cabarets of renown for robbers.

"Good evening, Jean Louis," said this person, accosting me.

"Good evening, my lad."

"What the devil are you doing there? You look as if you were funkng?"

"What do you mean, my boy? When the belly grumbles the mouth mumbles."

"What, the cupboard empty, that is not right for you, who are one of the *family*."

"Very true, but 'tis so."

"Come along, then, let us have a quart at Niguenac's: I have twenty *browns* left, and we will see how far they will go."

He conducted me to a vintner's, and called for a bottle, and then, leaving me for an instant, returned with two pounds of potatoes. "Here," he said, putting them smoking hot upon the table, "here are some gudgeons caught with a spade in the fields of Sablons; they are not fried though."

"These are oranges, but we want some salt."

"Salt, my lad, that will not ruin us."

The salt was brought, and, although an hour before I had made an excellent dinner at Martin's, I fell on the

potatoes, and devoured them as if I had not tasted food for a couple of days.

"You peg away," said he, "as if you would crash your *ivories*, (teeth;) one would think that you were tucking in at a regular *spread*."

"Oh, my lad, all that goes down the gullet fills the belly."

"Very true, very true."

Mouthful followed mouthful with prodigious rapidity, and I did nothing but peel and swallow: I cannot tell how it was that I was not literally crammed, but my stomach had never been more complaisant. At last my task was done, my comrade offered me a quid, and thus addressed me.

"On the word of a man, and as true as my name is Masson, and is the same as my father's, I have always considered you a hearty blade; I know you have been unfortunate, I have been told so, but the devil's hoof is not always at the poor man's door, and if you like I can put you on a good scent."

"That would not, perhaps, suit me, for my *rigging* is not over and above excellent."

"True! I see, I see, (looking at my clothes, which were rather tattered,) it seems that at this moment you are not the luckiest *cove* in the world."

"Very right: I have most urgent need of a new fit out."

"In that case come with me, I have a locksmith's daughter with which I shall clear out an apartment this evening."

"Tell me all about it, for I must learn the particulars before I can join you in it."

"What a flat you are, there is no occasion for you to be *fly*."

"Oh! that is all true as gospel, and I am your man, only you can explain in two words ——."

"Now, hold your *gab*, I tell you my plan is settled, and the booty sure: the *fence's ken* (receiver's house) is only a stone's throw off. As soon as *prigged*, so

soon disposed of; it is a good haul, and you shall have your whack."

"Come, then, let us be off."

Masson conducted me to the boulevard Saint Denis, which we traversed until we came to a heap of stones. There he stopped, looked about him to see that no one was watching, and then going up to the pile, he took off several lumps, put his hand into the cavity and fished up a bunch of keys.

"I have now all the herbs of Saint John," said he, "and we will go together to the corn-market."

On reaching the place, he pointed out to me, at a small distance, and almost opposite the guard-house, the house which he intended to enter.

"Now, my boy," said he, "do not go far distant, wait for me, and keep your weather-eye open; I am going to see if the *mot* has *mizzled*, (if the woman of the house has gone out.)"

Masson opened the side-door, but no sooner had he shut it after him than I ran to the post, where making myself known to the chief, I hastily told him that a robbery was then committing, and that no time was to be lost, if they would secure the robber with the property in his possession. Having done this, I returned to the place where Masson had left me. Hardly had I got there when some person, advancing towards me, said,

"Is it you, Jean Louis?"

"Yes, it is me," was my reply, testifying my astonishment that he had returned empty-handed.

"Oh, say nothing about it; a devil of a neighbour came up the staircase and deranged my plans; but what is deferred is not lost. Minute follows minute and the mutton is boiled at last, as you will see; one must not compromise oneself."

He then left me again, and was not long in reappearing with a very large bundle, under the weight of which he was almost sinking. He passed me without uttering a word: I followed, and walking in close

files, two guards, armed only with the bayonet, followed him also, making the least possible noise.

It was necessary to know where he deposited his booty. He entered a shopkeeper's at the Rue du Tour, (the death's head,) where he only stopped a moment.

"It was heavy," said he, on coming out, "and I have still a good *cast* to haul in."

I allowed him to go on, and returning again to the room he had before entered he completed the gutting of it; and scarcely had ten minutes elapsed before he descended the second time, carrying on his head a bed, mattresses, quilts, curtains, and sheets. He had not had time to make a good bundle of them, and on crossing the threshold, being stopped by the narrowness of the door, and unwilling to drop his prey, he stumbled and almost fell, but, recovering himself, he began his journey, beckoning me to follow him. At a turn of the street he came up to me, and said, in a low voice,

"I think I shall go back the third time, if you will go up with me, as we can then get down the window-curtains and blinds."

"Agreed," said I; "when one sleeps on straw curtains are a luxury."

"A luxury, indeed," said he, smiling; "but no time must be lost in chatter, do not go far away and I will hail you as I pass."

Masson went on his way, but at a short distance from where we had met we were both stopped. We were first conducted to the guard-house, and afterwards to the commissary, who interrogated us.

"There are two of you," said the public officer to Masson, (pointing at me,) "who is this man? I suppose a thief like yourself."

"Who is this man? Do I know him? Ask himself; when I shall have seen him once more, that will be the second time."

"You must not tell me that there is no collusion between you, for you were met together."

“There is no collusion, my worthy commissary: he was going on one side of the way, I was coming on the other, just as he was passing close beside me, something slid from me, it was a pillow; I told him of it, and he stooped to pick it up, and just then the guard came up and nabbed us both: this is why I am now before you, and I wish I may die if it is not the actual truth. Ask him if it is not.”

The story was not badly imagined, and I took care not to deny what Masson said, but follow in his track: at length the commissary appeared convinced. “Have you any papers?” he inquired. I showed a permission of residence, which was pronounced correct, and my dismissal was instantly ordered. An evident satisfaction pervaded the features of Masson, when he heard the words, *allez-vous coucher*, (go to bed,) addressed to me: it was the formula of my liberty, and he was so much rejoiced at it, that any person must have been blind not to perceive it.

The robber was still kept, and nothing remained but to lay hands on the female receiver before she had disposed of the property intrusted to her. An immediate search was made, and, surprised in the midst of most material evidence which condemned her, the death's head was carried off from her trade at the moment when she least expected it.

Masson was taken to the prefecture of police, and the next day, according to the custom of thieves, from time immemorial, when a brother labourer is grabbed, I sent him a twopenny brown loaf, a hock of bacon, and a franc. I was told that he felt obliged by the attention; but had not the slightest suspicion that he who sent him the tribute of the fraternity was the cause of his mishap. It was only at La Force that he learnt that Jean Louis and Vidocq were the same person, and then he devised a singular means of defence; he asserted that I was the author of the robbery with which he was charged, and that, wanting his aid to remove the property, I had gone to seek him: but this long stor” stated to the

court would not bear him out, and Masson in vain pleaded his innocence: he was sentenced to incarceration.

A short time afterwards I was assisting at the preparations for the departure of the chain of galley-slaves, when Masson, whom I had not seen since his apprehension, saw me through the grating.

"Ha!" said he to me, "Monsieur Jean Louis: and so it was you who got me into the *stone jug*. Oh! if I had known that you were Vidocq I would have made you pay for the oranges!"

"You are a well-wisher of mine, then; you who made me the proposal of accompanying you?"

"Very true, but you never told me that you were a *nose*."

"If I had told you so I should have betrayed my trust, and that would not have prevented you from doing the job; you would only have chosen another *pal*."

"But you are not the less a rascal; I, who was so kind to you! Now, I would rather remain here as long as my life continued in my body, than be free, as you are, and equally dishonoured."

"Every man to his taste."

"That is very fine! your taste—a *nose*, a spy—very fine, truly!"

"Why, it is as respectable a trade as thieving; besides, but for us what would the honest men do?"

At these words he burst into a loud fit of laughter.

"Honest men! honest men!" he repeated, "you really make me laugh when I am in no grinning mood. Honest men! what would become of them? do not trouble yourself, for it cannot concern you; when you are at the meadow (*Bagne*) again you will sing to a different tune."

"Oh! he will return there," said one of the prisoners who was listening to us.

"He," cried out Masson, "we do not want him; luck to the jolly boys! that's the thing."

Every time that my duties called me to Bicêtre I was sure that I should have to put up with such reproaches as I received from Masson. I seldom entered into discussion with the prisoner who apostrophized me but I was not always silent, for fear that he might suppose, not that I despised him, but that I was afraid of him. Being in the presence of some hundreds of malefactors who had all, more or less, to complain of me, since they had all been apprehended by me, it may be supposed that it was necessary to evince some firmness, but this firmness was never more requisite than on the day when I first made my appearance in the midst of this horrible population.

I was no sooner the principal agent of the police of safety, than, most jealous of the proper fulfilment of the duty confided to me, I devoted myself seriously to acquire the necessary information. It seemed to me an excellent method to class, as accurately as possible, the descriptions of all the individuals at whom the finger of justice was pointed. I could thereby more readily recognise them if they should escape, and at the expiration of the sentence it became more easy for me to have that surveillance over them that was required of me. I then solicited from M. Henry authority to go to Bicêtre with my auxiliaries, that I might examine, during the operation of fettering, both the convicts of Paris and those from the provinces, who generally assemble on the same chain. M. Henry made many observations to turn me from a step, of which the advantages did not seem to him proportioned to the imminent danger to which I should thereby expose myself.

"I am informed," said he to me, "that the prisoners have conspired to play you some mischievous trick. If you persist—if you go at the departure of the chain, you will afford them an opportunity which they have long anxiously awaited: and, by my honour, whatever precaution you may take, I will not insure your safety." I thanked this gentleman for the interest which he testi-

fied for me, but at the same time insisted that he should accord me the permission I asked for, and he at length gave me the order which it was necessary for me to obtain.

On the day of fettering I went to Bicêtre with some of my agents; I entered the court, and instantly a most tumultuous uproar ensued, mingled with cries: "Down with the spies! down with the villain! down with Vidocq!" were heard from all the windows, where the prisoners, mounted on each other's shoulders, with faces pressed against the bars, were collected in groups. I advanced a few paces, and the vociferations redoubled; the whole place resounded with invectives and threats of destruction, uttered with accents of fury; it was a most infernal sight to look at the visages of these cannibals, on which were manifested, by horrible contortions, the thirst of blood and the desire of vengeance. There was throughout the whole prison a most frightful uproar; I could not restrain an impulse of terror, and reproaching myself with my imprudence, was almost tempted to beat a retreat; but suddenly my courage mounted. "What!" said I to myself, "thou hast not trembled when thou hast attacked the villains in their dens: they are here under bolts and bars, and art thou now scared? Courage; if thou must perish, at least make head against the storm, and let them not think they have intimidated thee!"

This return to a resolution more suited to the opinion which should really be formed of me, was so rapid as to leave no opportunity for any person to remark my weakness; I soon recovered all my courage, and, no longer burthened by a shadow of fear, walked boldly forward with my eyes fixed on the windows, and advanced to those of the lower story. At this moment a new burst of rage was evinced by the prisoners. They were not men, but ferocious beasts who were roaring: it was a tumult, a noise; it might have been thought that Bicêtre was about to be rent from its foundations, and that the walls of its cells were actually gaping

open. In the midst of this outrageous din, I made a signal that I wished to speak : a dead silence ensued after the tempest, and they listened. "Scum of the mob," I said, "why do you howl thus? It was when I grabbed you that you should, not have cried out, but defended yourselves. Shall you be any better for thus reproaching me? You treat me as a spy; well! I am a spy, but so are you also, for there is not one amongst you who has not offered to sell his comrade to me, in the hopes of thereby obtaining an impunity which I would not grant you; I rendered you to justice because you were culpable. I have not spared you I know; what motives have I for doing so? Is there any one here whom I ever knew when a freeman who can reproach me with ever having been his accomplice? Besides, even if I have been a thief, tell me what does it prove but that I am more skilful or fortunate than you, since I have not been caught in the fact. I defy the most malicious to show a tittle of evidence to prove that I have been accused of robbery or swindling. It is useless to seek for twelve o'clock at three in the morning; oppose me by a single fact, one solitary truth, and I will confess myself the greatest rogue amongst you all. Is it the profession that you disapprove? let those who blame me most for this tell me frankly, whether they do not a hundred times a day desire to be in my place?"

This harangue, during which no one interrupted me, was followed by hooting and shouting. Soon afterwards vociferations and roarings began again, but I felt no sensation but that of indignation, and, transported with anger, I became bold even beyond my strength. They announced that the convicts were about to be led into the court of fetters; I went to post myself in the passage, at the moment when they came to the call; and, determined on selling my life dearly, I awaited until they should try to accomplish their threats. I confess that, in my mind, I desired much that one of them should attempt to lay hands upon me, so greatly did

The desire of vengeance animate me. Ill fated was the man who would have dared to assail me ! but not one of these wretches made the least attempt, and I had only to endure the scowling look, to which I responded with that assurance which always disconcerts the enemy. The call terminated, a low murmur was the prelude to a fresh uproar : they vomited forth imprecations against me ; “ Let him come on then, he remains at the gate,” the convicts bellowed forth, adding to my name the grossest epithets. Driven to extremity by this insolent defiance, I entered with one of my agents, and went into the midst of two hundred robbers, the majority of whom were arrested by me : “ Come on, my friends ! courage,” cried they in the cells in which they were shut up, “ look at the pig, kill him, and let us hear no more about him.”

Now or never was the the time ;—“ Now, gentlemen,” said I to the galley slaves, “ kill him, you see that they advise you well ; try.” I do not know what revolution of opinion actuated them, but the more I was in their power, the more they became appeased. At the termination of the fettering, those men, who had sworn to exterminate me, were so much softened that many of them begged me to render them slight services. They had no reason to repent of having taxed my kindness, and the next day, at the hour of departure, after having thanked me, they bade me a cordial farewell. All was changed from black to white ; the most mutinous of the previous evening had become supple, respectful at least in appearance, and almost overpoweringly so.

This was an experimental lesson of which I never lost the remembrance. It proved to me that, with persons of this stamp, we can only be potent when resolute : to keep them respectful, it is enough to have awed them once. From this period, I never allowed the chain to quit unless I attended the fettering of the convicts, and, with very few exceptions, I was never afterwards insulted. The convicts were accustomed to

see me ; if I did not go, it seemed as if they missed something, and in fact, nearly all of them had some commission to give me. From the moment they fell under the control of civil death, I was, in a measure, their testamentary executor. With a small portion resentments were not obliterated, but a thief's vengeance is not lasting. For eighteen years that I have carried on the war with thieves, little or great, I have often been menaced ; many galley slaves, celebrated for their intrepidity, have made oaths to assassinate me as soon as they should be at liberty ;—they have all perjured themselves, and will continue to do so. Am I asked why ? It is, that, at first, the only affair for a robber is to rob : that alone occupies him. If he cannot do otherwise, he will kill me to get my purse, that is his “ vocation ; ”—he will kill me to do away with a testimony which would destroy him, this is again a part of his business ;—he will kill me to avoid punishment ;—but when the punishment is inflicted, what purpose would it answer ? Robbers do not lose time in assassination.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Utility of a good stomach—The suspicious occurrence—The procession of bundles—The swallows of La Grève—The convenience of a hackney-coach—The swag of these gentlemen—The shipwright's man—There is no trusting every body—Madame Bras, or the scrupulous shopkeeper—Anlette, or the good woman—People do not always eat—The first who was king—Vidocq caught, a new piece of which the last act is passed in a guard-house—I play the part of Vidocq—Representation at my benefit—Unanimous applause—*Pomme Rouge*—*Le grand Casuel*—The inspection of papers—I let a robber escape—The veteran who takes his broth—The author of the *Pied-du-Mouton*—The accusing stockings and cravat—I lose my five-franc piece—The fight with the vintner—I am apprehended—The commissary's round—My deliverance—The bandage falls—Vidocq the Catcher recognised in Vidocq the Caught—Do you wish for a piece of good advice ?—Mind how the nail is driven !

ONE night, half of which had been spent in the obscure lurking places of the Halle, hoping to fall in

with some thieves who, in the overflow of that good-nature which two or three glasses of liquor, offered at a fitting time, produces, allow themselves to be *pumped*, as to their past doings, those now in hand, and those meditated,—I was retiring, very much discomposed at having, to the detriment of my stomach, swallowed from pure vexation a good number of small glasses of that diluted spirit to which vitriol gives the strength and flavour, when, at the corner of the Rue des Coutures Saint-Gervais, I saw several individuals squatted in the embrasures of the doors. By the light of the lamps, I easily distinguished beside them packets which they were endeavouring to squeeze into a smaller compass, but the suspicious whiteness of which could not fail to attract attention. Bundles at this hour of the night, and men who seek an obscure shelter when no water was falling ;—a prodigious portion of perspicuity was not wanting to find, in such a combination of circumstances, all the characteristics of a suspicious occurrence. I made up my mind that they were thieves, and the bundles the booty which they had just obtained. “ Good,” said I to myself, “ let us evince no suspicions, but follow the procession when it sets forth, and if it passes by the corps de garde, catch is the word ; on the other hand I will see them to their homes, take the address, and send the police after them.” I thereupon made up my mind, without appearing to be troubled with what was behind me, but scarcely had I advanced ten paces when some one calls, “ Jean Louis !” it was the voice of a man named Richelot, whom I had often met at the various thieves’ haunts. I stopped naturally.

“ Ah ! good evening, Richelot,” said I, “ what the devil are you doing here at this time of the morning ? Are you alone ? You look frightened.”

“ Well I may be, I have narrowly escaped being *nabbed* on the boulevard du Temple.”

“ *Nabbed !* and why ?”

"Why? here, come this way; do you see our friends with the bundles?"

"I am awake; you are loaded with *swag*," (plunder.)

I approached them; and the whole party instantly rising, as soon as they were on their feet I recognised Lapierre, Commery, Lenoir, and Dubuisson; they all four hastened to assure me how glad they were to see me, and to extend the hand of friendship to me.

COMMERY. "Ah! we narrowly escaped; my heart still thumps, put your hand upon it, feel how it goes tick-tack."

VIDOCQ. "That is nothing."

LAPIERRE. "Oh! we have had a fright in real earnest: I know very well that when I saw the *greens*,* my heart jumped bang into my mouth."

DUBUISSON. "And just above the market-place were the *hirondelles de la Grève*, (dragoons of Paris,) whom we met nose to nose on horseback just by *la Gaité*" (the theatre.)

VIDOCQ. "What spoonies you are! you should have had a *drag* to whisk off the *swag* in. You are but greenhorns."

RICHELOT. "Greenhorns if you like; but we had no means of conveyance, and we have therefore chosen the back streets."

VIDOCQ. "And where are you now going? If I can assist you in any way ——"

RICHELOT. "If you will pilot us, and give us your company as far as the Rue Saint-Sebastien, where we are going to deposit the *swag*, you shall have your *whack*."

VIDOCQ. "With pleasure, my boys."

RICHELOT. "Well, then, go first, and spy if you twig any *coves* or *beaks*."

Richelot and his companions took up their bundles and I went forward. Our progress was fortunate and

* The Parisian guard, whose uniform was green.

we reached the door of the house without interruption, each of us taking off our shoes to make no noise as we went up stairs. We reached the landing-place on the third story; they were awaiting us. A door opened softly, and we entered a vast chamber dimly lighted, of which the tenant was a shipwright's man, who had already been before the police. Although he did not know me, my presence seemed to trouble him, and whilst he was helping to conceal the bundles under the bed, I heard him ask a question in a low voice, which I could guess by the reply, which was spoken in a louder tone.

RICHELOT. "It is Jean-Louis, a good fellow; be quiet, he is staunch."

THE TENANT. "That's all right; there are now-adays so many *noses* and *sneaks*, that we should be *fly* to every *cove*."

LAPIERRE. "Oh be easy! be easy! I can answer for him as for myself: he is a friend and a Frenchman."

THE TENANT. "Since it is all right, I will trust him, and upon the strength of it we will have a *shove in the mouth* all round."

He got on a sort of stool, and lifting his hand up to the shelf of an old cupboard, he took out a full bladder.

"Here's the stuff, brandy and nothing but some of my own priggling. Come, Jean, you shall begin."

VIDOCQ. "With all my heart, (*pouring forth into a green glass and drinking.*) It is capital *out and out tippie*, which cheers as it goes down—now it is your turn, Lapierre; come, *sluice* your *ivories*."

The glass and bladder passed from hand to hand, and when each had drank enough we threw ourselves on the bed until the morning. At daybreak we heard in the streets the cry of the sweep, (in Paris we know that the savoyards are the cocks of the least frequented quarters.)

RICHELOT, (*jogging his neighbour.*) "Ah! Lapierre, we must go to the *fence*."

LAPIERRE. "Let me sleep, do."

RICHELOT. "Come, come, stir your stumps."

LAPIERRE. "Go by yourself, or take Lenoir."

RICHELOT. "You had better come, as you have already dealt with the old woman, and can make a surer bargain."

LAPIERRE. "Let me alone, I am sleepy."

VIDOCQ. "My G—, what sluggards you are, I will go if you will tell me where."

RICHELOT. "You are right, Jean Louis, but the *fence* has never seen you and will not deal for the *swag* but with us. But if you like we will go together."

VIDOCQ. "Yes, we two, and then another time she will know my phiz."

We went. The *fence* lived in Rue de Bretagne, No. 14, in the house of a sausage-maker, who appeared the owner of it. Richelot entered, and asked if Madame Bras was at home. Yes, was the answer; and after having gone through the passage we went up the stairs to the three pair. Madame Bras had not gone out, but, actuated by a principle of honour, she would not take in any property by daylight. "At least," said Richelot to her, "if you cannot take the goods now, give us earnest; come, it is a good haul, and you know we deal all upon the square."

"You say very true, but I cannot allow myself to be compromised by a pair of good eyes; come in the evening, then all cats are grey." Richelot tried by every effort to extract some coin from her, but she was inexorable, and we retired without having obtained any thing. My companion cursed, swore, stormed, till it did one's heart good to hear him.

"Well," said I to him, "one would imagine that you had lost every thing. Why vex yourself? If she will not, another will; come with me to my *fence*, I am sure she will lend us four or five crowns."

We went to the Rue Neuve-Saint-François, where I had fixed my domicile. By a low whistle, I made Annette understand that I wanted her, and she quickly

descended and came to us at the corner of the old Rue du Temple.

"Good day, Madame."

"Good day, Jean Louis."

"If you are inclined to be obliging, lend me twenty francs, and this evening you shall have them again."

"Yes, this evening! if you gain any thing you will go to la Courtille."

"No, I assure you I will be punctual."

"May I believe you? I will not refuse you then; come with me, whilst your friend waits for you at the cabaret at the corner of the Rue de l'Oseille."

On being alone with Annette I gave her the requisite instructions, and when I found that she clearly understood them, I rejoined Richelot in the cabaret; "Here," said I to him, showing the twenty francs, "is what you may call a *mot*, and nothing but a good one."

"Parbleu, wo'n't she *post the blunt* for the whole of the *swag*."

"I think not. She is only a *fence* for *metal*, *tickers*, and *frippery*."

"It is a pity, for she is an *out and out mot*, and just such a one as would suit us well."

After finishing our bottle, we set out to regain the lodging, where we found ready a Normandy goose of first-rate quality, and some other *prog*. I produced the money, and as it was intended for further supplies for the *victualling office*, our host went out for a dozen of wine and some bread. We were all so sharp-set that the provisions seemed only to appear and then vanish instantly. The bladder of brandy was drained to the last drop. Our meal terminated, it was proposed to open the packets. They contained most beautiful linen, sheets, shirts of extraordinary fineness, gowns with superbly worked borders, cravats, stockings, &c. all damp and wet. The thieves told me that they had taken the booty from one of the largest houses in the

Rue de l'Echiquier, where they had introduced themselves by a window, of which they had broken the bars.

The inventory concluded, I proposed that we should make different lots, and not sell them all in the same place. I insinuated that they would give as much for each lot as for the whole in a lump, and that two sales were better than one. My comrades were of the same opinion, and made two divisions of the booty. It then became a matter of question as to how to get rid of them; they were sure of the sale of one lot, but wanted a purchaser for the second. A clothes-seller, called Pomme Rouge, in the Rue de la Juiverie, was the man whom I pointed out to them. He had long been pointed out to me as a regular *fence*,—goods taken in and no questions asked. Here was an opportunity of putting him to the test, and I was unwilling that it should escape, for if he were caught, the result of my plans was infinitely more agreeable; for instead of only one *fence*, I should cause the arrest of two, and thus I should kill three birds with one stone.

It was agreed that they should make an offer to my man, but nothing could be done till the *darkey*, and what was to keep us from ennui till then? What could we converse about? Amongst robbers the communion of martyrs has not mental resources sufficient to keep up conversation for more than a quarter of an hour. What can be done? *prigs* do nothing, unless at *work*, and when at *work* they do nothing. But yet it was necessary to kill time; we had still some money before us, wine was voted for by acclamation, and we again commenced our libations to Bacchus. The sons of Mercury drink fast and long, but yet one cannot always be drinking. If, indeed, toppers were like the buckets of the Danaïdes, open at one end and with holes at the other, disgust would not proceed from plenitude! Unfortunately, each man has his capacity, and when, between the bladder and the brain, the wave, whose place of exit is too narrow, remounts towards its source, there is no need to say, my worthy friend, that if we

would avoid unpleasant consequences we must stop : this our companions did. As they thought they had need of their head for some later period, and as a thick cloud already began to spread over the osseous vault which covers the potent ruler of all our actions, that they might not lose all guidance, they insensibly ceased to make a funnel of their mouths, and only opened them to talk. What was the nature of their conversation ? The talk, which they would have been much posed to keep up on any other subject, turned on their comrades who were at the Bagne, or in prison. They also spoke about spies.

" Talking of spies," said the shipwright, " you must have heard of the celebrated rogue who has turned *nose*, that Vidocq ; do any of you fellows know him ?"

ALL TOGETHER. (myself in chorus.) " Yes, yes, but only by name."

DUBUISSON. " I know they talk a good deal about him. They say he comes from the Bagne, where he was sentenced for twenty-four years."

THE SHIPWRIGHT. " You are wrong, you flat. This Vidocq is a *prig*, who was sentenced for life for his many escapes. He was allowed to be set at liberty because he promised to *blow the gaff*, and that is the reason that he stops at Paris. He is a *deep file*; when he wants to *trap a covey* he tries to make friends with him, and, as soon as he has done that, he slips some *swag* into his *cly* and then all is done ; or else he leads him on to some *job* that he may be caught *at work*. He it was who *floored* Bailli, Jacquet, and Martinet. Oh G—, yes it was he ! let me tell you how he *did* them."

ALL TOGETHER. (myself in chorus.) " *Did* them, well said, my lad."

THE SHIPWRIGHT. " Whilst drinking together with another — like himself, you know him, the *rip* Riboulet, Manon's *fancy man*."

ALL. " Manon la Blonde's?"

THE SHIPWRIGHT. " Yes, she. They were speaking

of one thing and another, Vidocq says, as he had just left the Bagne, he wanted to find some friends to *prig*. The others are caught in the net. He tickled them so well, that he leads them to a *spot of work*, in the Rue Grand Zurlour. It was thought that he would *blow the gaff* to the police, and so he did. They were all taken, and in the mean time the rascal escapes with his comrade. This is his plan for catching good fellows. It was he who brought all the chaffers to be kissed by the *headsman's daughter* after having been their leader."

Every time the narrator paused we refreshed ourselves with a glass of wine. Lapierre, profiting by one of these pauses, spoke thus.

"What, is it that cock and bull story? He talks like a magpie. He is *chaffing* us. Do you think such *gammon* amuses us? I like to amuse myself."

THE SHIPWRIGHT. "What the deuce will you do, then? If we had any *books*, (cards,) we might handle them a bit."

LAPIERRE. "I'll tell you what we will do, act a play."

THE SHIPWRIGHT. "Go it then, M. Tarma (Talma.)"

LAPIERRE. "Do you think I can play by myself?"

RICHELOT. "We will help you, but what shall be the piece?"

DUBUISSON. "The play of Cæsar; you know there is one of that name, who says, the first who was king had a happy lot."

LAPIERRE. "Oh, none of that *blarney*; let us play the piece of Vidocq caught, after having sold his brethren like Joseph."

I scarcely knew what to think of this singular business: however, without being at all disconcerted, I cried out suddenly, "I will play Vidocq; they say he is a stout chap, and it will suit me."

"You're stout," said Lenoir, "but he is much stouter."

"That is no matter," observed Lapierre, "Jean Louis is not a bad representation, he weighs his weight."

"Come, then, we don't want so much *jaw* about it," said Richelot, lifting a table into one corner of the room. "You Jean Louis, and you Lapierre stand there; Lenoir, Dubuisson, and Etienne, (the shipwright) go to the other end: they shall be the friends, and I will seat myself on the bed and be the people."

"What people?" inquired Etienne. "Why the audience if you like. The shipwright is a booby."

"I am a spectator too."

"No, you stupid ass, I am. You are a friend, take your place, the play is going to begin."

We imagine ourselves in a public-house at la Courtille; each talks. I get up, and, under a pretext of asking for some tobacco, enter into conversation with the friends at the other table, I speak a little slang, they find me a *downy cove*, and give me a knowing look, which I return, and it is found we are all lads of the same *profession*. They follow the customary usages of society,—a glass more than necessary. I complain of being without a *job of work*. They complain, and we all complain together. We commence to be very full of mutual compassion and sympathy; I curse the *beaks*, they curse them too; I swear at the *big wigs* of my quarter who persecute me; my friends look at each other, consult each other's eyes, and deliberate upon the opportunity offered by, or the disadvantages of, my acquaintance. They take my hand, they press it, I consent; it is agreed that they may rely on me. Then comes the proposal—the character I play is that which, with but few variations, I always have played—I only alter a little, by putting the stolen goods into the pockets of my friends. Then was heard the unanimous applause, accompanied by shouts of laughter. "Well done, well done," cried the actors and the witness of this scene.

"Well done, certainly," said Richelot, "but see the sun is setting and it is time to *tramp*; the play can finish in the *drag*, or elsewhere, when we have done

with the *fence*; I will go and get a *jarvey*, if you fellows like?"

"Yes, yes, let us be off."

The drama was progressing well, we were approaching the climax, but it was doomed to be a very different one from that anticipated by these gentlemen, for the catastrophe was not in accordance with the title or the piece. We all got into a hackney-coach, and desired the coachman to stop at the corner of the Rue de Bretagne, and the Rue de Tourraine. Bras, one of the *fences*, was waiting at a short distance. Dubuisson, Commery, and Lenoir alighted, taking with them the portion of the merchandise which we had agreed to sell. Whilst they were agreeing about the price, I saw, on looking from the window, that Annette had fulfilled my intention. Persons whom I saw, some with their noses in the air, as if seeking for some number, others walking about like idlers, were not in this quarter, I thought, without some motive.

After ten minutes of expectation, we were rejoined by our comrades who had been to Bras. They had brought away one hundred and twenty-five francs for things worth at least six times as much; but it was of no consequence, they were not sorry to realize what they were in haste to enjoy.

There remained those bundles which we had reserved for Pomme Rouge. On reaching Rue de la Juiverie, Richelot said to me, "Come, you must go and bargain, you know the *downy fence*

"That will not do," I replied, "I owe him money, and we have had a row about it."

I owed Pomme Rouge nothing, but we had seen each other, and he knew that I was Vidocq. It would, therefore, have been imprudent to show myself, and I left my friends to arrange these matters, and on their return, as the appearance of Annette in the vicinity of the shop gave me the certainty that the police was on the *qui vive*, I proposed to discharge the coach and go and

sup in the cabaret of the Grand Casuel, on the Quai Pelletier, at the corner of the Rue Planche Mibray.

After the visit to Pomme Rouge we were richer by eighty francs, and the sum at our disposal was so considerable, that we might give way to some excess without fear of distressing ourselves, but we had no time to expend it, for scarcely had we got our glasses in hand when the guard entered, followed by a posse of inspectors. At the sight of the veterans and the spies all their countenances fell, and the general feeling was "we are caught." Thibault, the peace-officer, asked us for our papers, some had none, and others were not correct, mine were amongst these latter. "For the charge of all these sparks," said the peace-officer, "safe bind, safe find." We were tied two and two, and conducted to the commissary. Lapierre was coupled with me. "Have you good legs?" I said to him in a low tone. "Yes," was his reply, and when we reached the top of the Rue de la Tannerie, taking out a knife I had concealed up my sleeve, I cut the cord. "Courage, Lapierre, courage!" I cried. With a blow of my elbow I prostrated the veteran who had taken me by the arm; perhaps it was the very man who has since become food for Martin the bear; whether or not I darted away, and with a few leaps reached a small alley leading to the Seine. Lapierre followed me, and we reached the Quai des Ormes together.

They lost all traces of us, and I was very glad to have escaped without being recognised. Lapierre was equally rejoiced, for not having had any time for reflection, he was far from suspecting any sinister motives in me; but, in fact, if I favoured his escape, it was in the hope of introducing myself, under his auspices, into some other band of thieves. By fleeing with him I removed all suspicions that himself or his companions might have conceived, and kept up the good opinion which they had of me. In this way I hoped to make

new discoveries, for as I was a secret agent I was desirous of acting as quietly as possible.

Lapierre was free, but I kept him in sight, and was ready to give him up the moment he was no longer useful to me.

We continued running towards the hospital, where at length we stopped, and entered a cabaret to recover breath and rest ourselves. I ordered a measure of wine to refresh us; "Here, lad," said I to Lapierre, "here is a comforter."

"Oh yes, it is hard work."

"And difficult to keep up, is it not?"

"Nothing can drive the idea from my mind ——."

"What?"

"Here, let us drink."

And no sooner had he emptied his glass than he became more pensive; "No, no," he repeated, "nothing can drive the idea from my mind."

"What do you mean? tell me."

"Well, then, I will tell you."

"You are right; but first you will do well to take off the stockings you have on your feet, and the cravat about your neck."

Lapierre was nearly in the same condition as the celebrated author of the *Pied du Mouton*, when, to descend in the garden of the Palais Royal, he had no other covering on his feet than the dress-stockings and white satin slippers of his mistress. As it seemed to me that I perceived in the eyes of my friend that dark scowl of mistrust which, if one does not take care, increases so rapidly, I was glad to testify one of those marks of interest, the effect of which is to reassure a suspicious mind: such was my aim in advising him to remove from his attire some articles of small value, which, during the overhauling of the booty, his associates and himself had immediately applied to their own use.

"What shall I do with them?" said Lapierre.

"Throw them into the river."

"I'll not be such a fool! the silk stockings are quite new, and the cravat has never been hemmed."

"Silly nonsense."

"You want to laugh at me, my boy; throw away your own first."

I begged him to observe that I had nothing on that could compromise me. "You are like the hares," I added, "you lose your memory as you run; do you not remember that there was no cravat for me, and with trowsers like these (touching those I wore) would you have me wear women's stockings?"

He took off the stockings which, folding up, he enveloped in the cravat.

Thieves are at the same time misers and spendthrifts: he felt the necessity of removing these convicting articles out of sight, but his heart bled at the thoughts of not making a profit by them. It is because the produce of robbery is often so dearly paid for, that the sacrifice of it is always painful.

Lapierre was most anxious to sell his stockings and cravat, and we went together to the Rue de la Bûcherie to offer them to a shopkeeper, who gave us forty-five sous for them. Lapierre appeared to have made up his determination since the catastrophe of Grand Casuel; yet he was constrained in his manners, and if I am any judge of what was passing in his mind, in spite of my efforts to reestablish myself in his opinion, I was strongly suspected. Such feelings were not very favourable to my projects, and persuaded that henceforward I must not temporize, but bring matters to a speedy termination, I said to Lapierre, "If you like we will go and sup at Place Maubert."

"I will, if you please," was the reply.

I took him to the Deux Frères, where I called for wine, pork chops, and cheese. At eleven o'clock we were still at table, every body had retired, and they brought us in a bill which came to four francs fifteen centimes. I immediately cried out, "My five-franc

piece, my five-franc piece! where can it be?" I rummaged all my pockets and searched myself from head to feet. "My God! I must have lost it in running: look, Lapierre, if you have it?"

"No, I have only my forty-five sous, and not a *dump* besides."

"Look for it, I am going to try and arrange with the people." I offered the cabaretier two francs fifty centimes, promising to bring him the remainder on the morrow; but he would not listen to me. "Ah! you think," said he, "that you may come and have all you want here, and then pay me with monkey's allowance."

"But," I observed to him, "it is an accident which might happen to the most honest man."

"That's all my eye! When one is low in cash we are trickish or so; a cup of wine, or so, one would not mind, but it is no *go* to have a whole supper on *tick*."

"Oh, never mind, old lad; if it accommodates good fellows, never mind."

"Come, come, not so much *jaw*; pay me, or I'll fetch the guard."

"The guard! that for the guard and you too;" accompanying the words with a gesture of contempt much used by common people.

"Ah, you vagabond! is it not enough to carry off my property?" cried he, doubling his fist and thrusting it in my face. "Do not strike me," I replied to his apostrophe, "do not strike me, or ——"

He advanced towards me, and I instantly hit him a blow. A quarrel and uproar followed, which Lapierre thinking would come to serious consequences, judged it best to *mizzle*; but on the very moment when he was about to make off and leave me to extricate myself as best I might, the waiter seized him by the throat and cried out "thieves."

The guard-house was nigh, the soldiers came in, and, for the second time in that day, we were placed between two ranges of those candles of Maubeuge whose wicks

have a smell of gunpowder. My comrade endeavoured to prove to the corporal that he was not in fault, but the veteran was immovable, and we were shut up in the guard-house. Lapierre became silent and sad as a brother of La Trappe, he did not even unclothe his teeth. At length, about two o'clock in the morning, the commissary went his round, and asked to see the persons in confinement. Lapierre first appeared, and was told he might go if he would pay the bill. I was called in my turn, and on entering the room recognised M. Legoux. The recognition was mutual, and in two words I explained to him what I had done; I told him the place where the stockings and cravat had been sold, and whilst he hastened to seize on these articles, which were requisite to convict Lapierre, I returned to him. He was no longer silent.

"The bandage has fallen," said he, "I see what is done, it was all a plot."

"What! you are laughing at me, but I will speak frankly. Yes, it is done, and it is a plot, but it was you who got us into the trap."

"No, my friend, it was not me; I do not know who, but I suspect you more than any one else."

At these words I grew angry, he furious: to threats succeeded blows, and we proceeded to fight until we were separated. As soon as we were parted I found my five-franc piece; and as the cabaretier had not reckoned the thump I gave him, it was enough for me not only to satisfy all his demands, but also to offer to the corps de garde, I will not say the stirrup-cup, but that small drop of farewell token which the *snob* always pays willingly. This tribute paid, there was no further reasons for my detention, and I started off without paying my adieu to Lapierre, who was now known; and the next day I learnt that the most complete success had crowned my efforts. The two *fences*, Bras and Pomme Rouge, had been surprised in the midst of ample proofs of the nefarious traffic which they carried on; the robbers had been apprehended with the property

which they had instantly applied to their use, and they were compelled to confess; Lapierre alone had tried denial of the facts, but, confronted with the shopkeeper of Rue de la Bûcherie, he was decidedly and positively recognised—the stockings and cravat were his accusers. The whole gang, robbers and receivers, were sent to La Force, in the expectation of judgment; there they soon learnt that the comrade who had played the part of “Vidocq caught,” was, in fact, “Vidocq the catcher.” Great was their surprise; how they must have commended the admirable talents of the comedian! The sentence confirmed, all were ordered to the Bagne. The evening before their departure I was present when they were fettered, and, on seeing me, they could not forbear smiling.

“Behold your work, you villain,” said Lapierre, “you are content, no doubt.”

“I have, at least, no reproach to make against myself, I did not advise you to steal. Did you not make up to me? Why be so confiding? When a man exercises a profession like yours, he ought to be more on his guard.”

“It is all well,” said Commery, “you are sure to be at the galleys again yourself.”

“In the mean time a good journey to yourself. Keep my place for me, and if ever you return to *Pantin* (Paris) do not play at such dangerous games again.”

After this reply they conversed together, and Richelot said, “Well, well! I owe him a turn.”

“As for you,” replied the shipwright, “you brought him amongst us. Since you knew him, you ought to have known that he was a *nose*.”

“Ah, yes! it was Richelot who brought it upon us,” sighed Pomme Rouge, who was being fettered, and nearly had his head broken by the hammer which was rivetting his collar.

“Do not move,” said the smith roughly. “It was he, it was he,” replied the *fence*, “who *floored* us, and but for him —.”

"Stand steady, you fool, and mind *your eye*." These were the last words I heard, but as I went away I saw, by certain gestures, that the colloquy grew warmer. What are they saying? I know not.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

NOW for Saint Cloud—The aspiring spy—The scheme of diversion, or the deceitful stratagem—An early visit—The disorder of a sleeping chamber—Singular comments—No report—They are honest fellows in the faubourg Saint Marceau—The turkey's claws—Take care of your shoes—Sacrifice to the god of fat paunches—*Deus est in nobis*—Judas' language—The policeman's nectar—Explanation of the word *Traïffe*—The two mistresses—The man who arrests himself—Content gives wings—The new Epictetus—A monologue—Despairing incredulity—Change from a tilbury to wooden shoes—A tradition—The mistress of a Russian prince—Brown bread and the tit-bits of Tortoni—Mother Bariole—The old seraglio, or the hell of a kept woman—Prostitutes and hackney-coach horses—The friend of all the world—The invulnerable—The picture of the Sabines—The holy arch—The money-box—*Infandum regina jubes*—Hatred to epaulettes—Good sentiments—A strange religion—The lottery ticket and the offering to Sainte-Geneviève—Example of remarkable fidelity—Penelope—The oath—I know the beautiful mask—Journey through Paris—Louison *la Blagueuse*—The monster—A fury—Cruel duty—Emilie in the guard-house—Return to Bariole's—The friend's bottle—The Sybil's tripod—Philemon and Baucis—Josephine Real, or the fruits of a good education—Philosophical reflections on concord and death—Three arrests—The traitor punished—A trait of active morality—A liberation—Answer to critics.

IN the summer of 1812, a professed thief, named Hotot, who had long sought to be reinstated as a secret agent, in which employment he had been engaged previously to my admission into the police, came to offer his services to me for the fête of Saint Cloud. It is known as one of the most celebrated of the environs of Paris, and that, led by the concourse of persons, pick-pockets assemble there in large bodies. It was on Friday that Hotot was brought to me by a comrade. This step appeared to me the more extraordinary, as I had previously given information against him which

had led to his being brought before the court of assizes. Perhaps he only desired to connect himself with me that he might the more readily play me some ill turn : such was my first thought, but I received him kindly and even testified my satisfaction that he had not doubted my wish to be of service to him. I evinced so much apparent sincerity in my proffers of good-will towards him, that it was impossible for him to conceal his intentions from my penetration. A sudden change, which overspread his whole face, convinced me instantly, that, in accepting his offer, I was favouring some plans which he was not willing to confide to me. I saw his internal congratulations at having duped me. But be that as it might, I feigned to have the utmost confidence in him, and it was agreed that, on the following Sunday, he should go, at two o'clock, and post himself near the principal basin, that he might point out the thieves of his acquaintance, who, he told me, would come to *work* at that spot.

On the day appointed, I went to Saint-Cloud with the only two agents I then had under my command. On arriving at the destined place, I looked out for Hotot ; I walked backwards and forwards, looked about me on all sides, but no Hotot. At length, after waiting for at least an hour and a half, my patience being worn nearly threadbare, I despatched one of my staff to the principal walk, desiring him to endeavour to find an auxiliary whose want of punctuality was as suspicious as his zeal.

My agent searched for an entire hour, when wearied with exploring every hole and corner of the garden and park, he returned and told me that he could not find Hotot. The moment afterwards I saw my man himself running towards me bathed in perspiration, " You do not know," said he to us, " that I had just got hold of six *prigs*, but they saw you and instantly *mizzled*, I am sorry, for they swallowed the bait, but what is deferred is not lost, and I shall have them yet."

I pretended to take all this for gospel, and Hotot

was convinced that I had not any doubt of his veracity. We spent the greater portion of the day together, and only separated about twilight. I then went to the gendarmes' station, where the peace officers told me that many watches had been stolen in a direction precisely opposite to that in which, by the advice of Hotot, our watch was kept. It was then plain to me that he attracted us to one point, that he might the more easily *work* in another. It is an old stratagem in the tactics of diversion and false information given by thieves that they may have less fear of the police.

Hotot, whom I took good care not to reproach in any way, imagined that he had completely gulled me; but if I said nothing, I did not think the less, and increasing my show of friendship towards him, whilst he was meditating a renewal of his Saint Cloud trickery, I was on the alert to catch him tripping at the first opportunity. Our friendship being still very close, the opportunity presented itself earlier than I had even dared to hope.

One morning, when returning with Gaffré from the faubourg Saint Marceau, where we had passed the night, I suddenly determined to make a visit to Hotot. We were near the Rue Saint Pierre aux Bœuf, where he resided. I proposed to my comrade of the watch to accompany me, and, on his assenting, we went to Hotot's, where, on knocking, he opened the door and appeared surprised to see us; "what a wonder at this early hour."

"Are you astonished?" said I; "we come to have a glass with you."

"Oh! you are welcome;" and then jumping into bed, "Where is the liquor?"

"Gaffré will be so kind as to fetch it."

I put my hand into my pocket, and as Gaffré, as a Jew, was less careful of his trouble than his money, he willingly undertook the commission, and went out for that purpose. During his absence I remarked that Hotot had the air of a man who has gone to bed later than usual; the room was, besides, in a very extraor-

dinary state of disorder. His clothes, rather torn than taken off, seemed to have had a heavy soaking; and his shoes were covered with white clay, which was still wet. Not to have concluded from all these indications that Hotot had but recently returned, would not have been Vidocq. For the moment I thought nothing more of it, but my fancy soon wandered into the wide field of conjecture, and I conceived suspicions which I took care not to evince; I would not even appear curious, that is to say indiscreet, and, for fear of disquieting my worthy friend, I did not ask him a single question. We spoke of the rain and the fine weather, but more of the fine weather than the rain, and when we had nothing left to drink we went away.

Once out of the house, I communicated to Gaffré the remarks I had made; "I am much deceived," I added, "or he has been abroad all night; there has been something in the wind."

"I think so too, for his clothes are still wet, and his shoes covered with mud! He has not been walking in the dust."

Hotot hardly thought that we were talking of him, but yet his ears must have tingled. "Where has he been? What has he done?" we inquired of each other; perhaps he has joined some gang. Gaffré was no less puzzled than myself, and we were compelled to think that Hotot might be honest after all.

At twelve o'clock, we went to make our report on the transactions of the night; our account was not very interesting; nothing has occurred was the whole contents. Ah! said M. Henry to us, the people in the faubourg Saint Marceau are all honest! I had much better have sent you to the boulevard Saint Martin; it appears that the *lead robbers* (*voleurs de plomb*) have renewed their work; they carried off more than four hundred and fifty pounds from a house newly built. The watchman, who pursued without catching them, says, they were four in number. The robbery was effected during the heavy shower of last night."

"During the heavy shower! parbleu!" I cried, "you know one of the robbers."

"Who is he?"

"Hotot."

"He who served the police, and who asked leave again to enter it?"

"The same."

I told M. Henry my suspicions and remarks, and as he was convinced that I was correct, I went out instantly, that I might with all possible speed convert what was at present but presumptive evidence into proof positive. The commissary of the quarter in which the robbery had been effected, went with me to the spot, and we found in one place on the ground the deep imprint of two nailed shoes, and the earth had been indented by the weight of a man. These traces could afford precise indications; and precautions were taken that they should not be effaced. I felt perfectly assured that they were exactly fitted to Hotot's shoes, and taking Gaffré with me to him, that I might verify my suspicions without alarming the culprit, I devised the plan, which was thus executed. On getting to Hotot's residence we made a tremendous noise at the door.

"Get up, get up, we have brought the poultry." He arose, turned the key, and we stumbled into the room like men somewhat stupid with liquor.

"Hallo!" said Hotot, "allow me to pay my respects to you. You have been *warming the oven* early this morning."

"Yes, and we have come to you," I replied, "to finish the baking. You are very cunning," I added, showing him in its covering a purchase which we had made as we came along, "guess what we have in here."

"How can I guess?" Then, tearing the corner of the paper, I exposed the claws of a bird.

"Ah! *sacre dieu!*" he cried, "it is a turkey."

"Yes, a brother of yours, and, as you see, it is by

its feet that we know this sort of animal : do you understand me now ?”

“ What does he say ?”

“ I say it is roasted.”

“ Oh ! it should be baked with venison fat.”

“ Venison fat ! here look at it.”

I handed the bird to him, and whilst he examined and turned it over and over, Gaffré stooped down, picked up his shoes, and put them in his hat.

“ Well, and what did you give for this *bit of hollow* ?”

“ *Seven bob, a kick, and eight mag.*”

“ The d —— ! Seven shillings and tenpence. That is the price of a pair of shoes.”

“ Exactly so, my boy,” said the pilferer, rubbing his hands.

“ Here is plenty to bite at ; and how well it smells, quite deliciously, it is perfectly tempting ! We will soon settle his business.”

“ Who carves ? I cannot.”

“ Well, then, we will help you ; is there a knife in the box ?”

“ Yes, look in the drawer.”

I found a knife, and then sought an excuse to send Gaffré out. “ Oh, by the way,” said I, whilst I laid the cloth, “ you can oblige me by going to my house, and saying, that they need not wait dinner for me.”

“ Very well, and then you will be off without me ; that is *no go* ; I shall not *cut my stick* until I have had some *grubbery*.”

“ But we cannot eat without drinking.”

“ Well, then, I will have the liquor produced.”

He opened the window, and called to a vintner, “ And now,” he added, “ you cannot play me any trick.”

Gaffré was like the majority of police agents, and, except being treacherous, a good enough fellow ; but a perfect gourmand. With him the belly superseded all other business ; and thus, although he had obtained

possession of the shoes, which was the main point in the affair, I saw I could not induce him to leave the place until he had had his share of the eatables. I hastened, therefore, to cut up the bird, and when the wine arrived, "Come to table," I cried to my gastronomist, "make haste, and cram your fill."

Hotot's bed was his table, and without any forks but those of father Adam, we made to the god who is within us, that is the god of *Ventrus*, a sacrifice in the manner of the ancients. We ate like ogres, and the repast was quickly terminated. "Now," said Gaffré, "I can *toddle*. I know not if you are like me, but when the sun shines in my stomach, I am good for nothing; when the chest is full it is a different matter."

"Well, then, *mizzle*."

"D. I. O."

He took his hat, and disappeared.

"Now he is gone," said Hotot, with the tone of a man who is not sorry to be left alone with another for some time. "Well, my friend Jules, is there never to be a vacancy for Hotot?"

"Patience, patience, all will come in good time."

"It is only for you to say a good word for me, and M. Henry would listen, if you would ——"

"It must not be to-day, then, for I expect a good rowing; Gaffré will not escape, for we have not sent in our report these two days."

This lie was not without its purpose; it was not necessary that Hotot should think I had been informed of the robbery in which I believed him a participator; he was without mistrust, and I kept him in that security; and, for fear he should think of getting up, I led the conversation to those points which most interested him. He spoke to me successively of many affairs. "Ah!" he said, sighing, "if I were certain of entering the police again, with a pay of twelve or fifteen *bob* a day, I could give such information! I know now of a burglary, which would be a welcome disclosure to M. Henry."

“ Do you ? ”

“ Yes, three robbers, Berchier called Bicêtre, Caffin, and Linois, whom I will give up to him in the actual fact, as sure as you and I make two.”

“ If you can, why don't you ? That would be an excellent beginning.”

“ I know it, but — ”

“ Are you afraid to make yourself seem visible in the business ? If you perform services, I will do my best to ensure your admission.”

“ Ah, my friend, you pour balm into my mind ; you will procure my admission.”

“ Oh that will be easily effected.”

“ Come then, a bumper to luck,” cried Hotot, transported with joy.

“ Yes, let us drink to your approaching reception.”

“ And the sooner the better.”

Hotot was enchanted, and already laid down a line of conduct ; he had his dreams of happiness, and there was in his very legs those inquietudes of hope which are produced by the prospect of coming pleasure. I was afraid lest he should quit his bed, when at length some person knocked at the door ; it was Gaffré, holding in his hand a small bottle of brandy, which Annette had given to him. “ *Traiffe*,” said my Israelitish colleague as he entered, in that Hebrew slang, which was doubtless the favourite language of our patron, Monsieur Judas. *Traiffe* and *maron* are one and the same thing. As I pique myself on being a Hebraist of the first order, I instantly comprehended him, and saw how to play my cards. Whilst I was pouring out for the neophyte the nectar of a policeman, Gaffré replaced the shoes. We continued to chat and drink, and before we parted, I learnt that the plunder of the lead was that of which Hotot proposed to point out the perpetrators. The father Bellemont, a blacksmith of the Rue de la Tannerie, was the *fence* whom he mentioned to me.

As these details were interesting, I told Hotot that I

should instantly communicate them to M. Henry, and recommended him to find out the place where the three thieves slept. He promised to point out the house, and when we had agreed upon preliminaries, we separated. Gaffré had not left me. "Well!" said he, "it is he, the shoes fit precisely, and the impression is very deep. In leaping from the window he must have fallen with all his weight." This was the signification of the word *traïffe*; and now I had only to take measures accordingly. I had already explained Hotot's conduct to myself, and I readily conceived the part he wished to play. In the first place, it was clear that he committed the robbery with the intention of making his profit by it, but he was chasing two hares at once; by pointing out his accomplices he attained his second object, that of making himself of consequence in the eyes of the police, that he might thereby be reestablished in their employ. I trembled to think of the consequences of such a combination. Wretch, said I to myself, I will contrive that he may have the recompense of his crime, and if the unhappy creatures who have aided him in his expedition are convicted, it is but just that he should be a partaker of their sentence. I did not hesitate to believe him the most guilty of the whole, and from what I knew of his character, it seemed most probable to me that he had led them on to it, only to contrive a job; I even went so far as to think that it was possible that he alone had committed the robbery, but thought it advisable to accuse of his own crime those individuals whose misconduct made them suspected characters. In each of these suppositions, Hotot was a great rogue, and I determined to rid society of him.

I knew that he had two mistresses, one Emilie Simonet, who had several children by him, and with whom he lived as a husband; the other Félicité Renaud, a common girl, who doated upon him. I thought I could contrive to attain my ends by setting these rivals at oggerheads, and by their mutual jealousy light the

flambeau that was to show him to justice. Hotot was watched, and in the afternoon I learned that he was in the Champs Elysées with Félicité. I went to him there, and taking him aside, told him that I required him on an affair of extreme importance.

"You must know," I said, "you are to be apprehended and taken to prison, where you must *pump a cove* that we shall *nab* this evening. As you will be in *quod* before him, he will not take you for a *sneak*, and when he is brought in you can easily *plant* yourself upon him."

Hotot accepted the proposition with joy. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "I am then a spy once more! You may rely on me, but I must first take leave of Félicité." He went towards her, and as the hour of nocturnal seductions, or *padding the pavé* for the amorously disposed, was nigh, she was not angry with him for leaving her so soon.

"Now you have got rid of the *mot*, I will give you instructions. You know the little *ken* on the boulevard Montmartre in front of the Theatre des Variétés?"

"Yes, Brunet's."

"Well, go there and seat yourself at the further end of the room with a bottle of beer, and when you see two of the inspectors of the officer of peace, Mercier, enter—you know them?"

"Know them! do you ask me such a question, who am an old trooper?"

"Well, as you know them it will be all right: when they come in, make them a sign that it is you, that they may not mistake you for any other person."

"You be easy, they will not mistake me."

"You know it will be disagreeable if they should lay hands on some unlucky citizen."

"Oh! there shall be no mistake, I shall be there, and then the signal agreed on. The signal will do all."

"You understand clearly?"

"Yes, do you take me for a fool? I will not give them the trouble to take a second glance."

"All right, they shall have the countersign, and as soon as they perceive you, they will know what they are to do : they will arrest and convey you to the station of Lycée, where you will stay two or three hours, and then the youth you are to *pump*, having already seen you there, will not be surprised to meet you again at the depot."

"Give yourself no uneasiness ; I will do the trick well, that I will defy the most *downy cove* to discover, that I am not situated exactly like himself. Besides, you will see how cleverly I do my work, to the very letter."

He seemed so hearty in the business, that I was really sorry at being compelled to deceive him thus, but, reflecting on his conduct towards his comrades, the feeling of pity which I had momentarily experienced was dissipated never to return. He gave me his hand, and we parted ; he walked with all the velocity of eager satisfaction ; the earth seemed scarcely to bear him. On my part, no less swift than he, I flew to the prefecture, where I found the inspectors I had mentioned to him ; one of them was named Cochois, now a watchman at Bicêtre ; I told them what they were to do and followed them. They entered the house.

Scarcely had they crossed the threshold, when Hotot, faithful to the orders I had given him, pointed to himself with his finger, like a man who says, "It is me." At this signal the inspectors went up to him, and asked for his letters of protection. Hotot, as proud as Artaban, answered that he had none. "Then you must come with us," was the immediate rejoinder, and to prevent him from running away, if he should be so inclined, they secured his hands with cords. During this operation, a sort of internal content overspread the face of Hotot : he was happy to find himself caught : he blessed his bonds : he contemplated them almost with love, for, as he believed, all this preparation was but a ceremonious form ; and in fact, like some philosopher of antiquity, he could boast of being free in his chains ;

and he said in a low voice to the inspectors, "Devil fetch me if I run! The *mauleys* and *trotters* are tied; you could not do more to secure a regular *workman*."

It was about eight in the evening when Hotot was brought to the guard-house: at eleven o'clock they had not brought in the person from whom he was to extract confession, and the delay began to appear extraordinary to him. Perhaps the individual might have escaped the pursuit of justice, or, perhaps, he had already confessed. In that case the aid of a *sneak* was useless; I know not what conjectures the prisoner formed, I only know that at length, tired with waiting, and thinking they had forgotten him, he asked the serjeant of the guard to inform the commissary of police that he was still there. "If he be there, let him remain there," said the commissary, "it is no business of mine." This answer transmitted to Hotot awakened no other idea than that of a negligence of the inspectors. "If I had my supper now," he added, with the comico-serio accent of that lachrymose gaiety which is less touching than laughable;—"they are making sport of me, perhaps they are stuffing away in some comfortable corner, whilst I am supping here with *Duke Humphrey*." Twice or thrice he called, sometimes the corporal, sometimes the serjeant, to relate his griefs to them; he did not even leave the officer of the guard alone, but supplicated him to allow of his being set at liberty. "I will return, if necessary," he added; "what do you risk, since I was only grabbed for a particular purpose?"

Unfortunately, the officer, who told us all these particulars next day, was one of those incredulous personages whose obstinacy is not to be shaken. Hotot was only tormented by his appetite; now, with persons who think there is such a thing as remorse, this might have been construed into presumptive innocence, but with those who trust only to lock and key—fatality had included this officer in the number; and, besides, not having any power to act for himself, however desirous of so doing, he drew the bolt upon Hotot, who, unable

to obtain anything from the inspectors, made his moan in the following broken and interrupted soliloquy, which, heard through the door, excited mirth, by his alternatives of grotesque resignation and impatience.

“Oh! I say, though, it is coming it a little too strong to keep me here all night!—impossible—they are coming—no; no more an inspector than I am a king—what the deuce keeps the brutes?—If I were behind them I would apply a quickener—if it is not their fault, to be sure, nothing can be said.—They certainly planted me for the purpose—yet, why don’t they bring in the *cove*—perhaps he has done them.—If he be not caught in the fact they can do nothing with him.—There is no fun in all this, though, to me, who have not tasted food since I arose.—Come, gentlemen, as soon as you please, at your earliest convenience—I am quite ready—but we can’t always have our own way.—What a devil of an unlucky go for me!—It plays the deuce with my stomach; I want to eat, and have nothing.—How my belly cries *cupboard*.—This is a nice new year’s present, I must confess.—Do they want to try my appetite?—A very excellent method, certainly—fasting is good for young people.—Never mind, never mind, it will not kill me this time, and I shall breakfast all the better in the morning.—I will wager they are guzzling away at some cabaret, the brutes!—If I were near them—this is a good joke, certainly, an admirable farce.—In the name of all the devils in h—, and the saints in the calendar!—Well, why put yourself out, my boy?—Hunger makes the wolf leave the woods—get out, get out yourself, boy, it is easy enough—if I had but my turkey of this morning—if my friend Jules were here—he does not know, ah! if he knew.”

Hotot said, as the people say, “if the king knew;” but whilst he was deploring my ignorance, and so very far from foreseeing the consequences of an arrest, which he supposed pretended, I, exploring the little streets in the neighbourhood of the place du Châtelet, had joined Emilie Simonet, in one of those low haunts where, to

suit light purses, a landlady keeps liquors and lasses, both tending to the same end and serving for the same purposes. Here the liquors are like the secret entrance of the lottery-office, a means of deceiving the spy: the shamefaced lover enters, under the pretext of taking a glass of wine, and is doubly poisoned. It is to this sort of blind coffee-shop that the refuse of prostitutes crowd, and heap their favours on the beastly drunkard, or make terms with the poverty of their customer. More than one *ci-devant* beauty, now reduced to her calico petticoat, her coarse apron, and wooden shoes,—unless she prefer *philosophes*, (shoes of fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five pence,) here boasts of the tradition, almost forgotten, though recent, of those charms which procured for her the cachemere and splendid veil which she displayed in the cavalcades of Montmorency, or else in the elegant tilbury which conveyed her to Bagatelle. I have seen many of these vicissitudes, and to give one of the million examples, there was a friend of Emilie, named Caroline, who had been the mistress of a Russian prince. In her days of splendour, a hundred thousand crowns a year did not pay the expenses of her establishment; she had equipages, horses, lackeys, courtiers; she had been very handsome, but her beauty had entirely faded. She was Emilie's companion, and even more degraded than her. Constantly muddled by liquor, she never had a lucid interval. The lady of the house, who provided her attire, for Caroline had no longer a rag of her own, watched her as closely as a cat does a mouse, lest she should sell her clothes. A hundred times she had been found at some low hole of vice naked as a worm; she had drank away every article of dress, even to her chemise. Such is the sad condition of these wretched creatures, almost all of whom have had, at one time of their lives, a run of good luck: after having the means of literally rolling in money, they feel the want of a crust to stop the cravings of hunger, and those palates, on which the delicacies of Tortoni palled, find a relish in the pota-

toes of La Grève. It is in this catalogue of courtesans that are to be found those damsels who form the delight of the paviors, messengers, and water-bearers: kept by the libertines of this laborious class, whose liberalities form their main chance, they, in their turns, when not smitten by some fencing-master, or street-singer, support the thieves, or, at least, if they are in good keeping, by way of return, they comfort them during their dungeon woes, and in the dead season of the year.

The comrade of the princess Caroline, Emilie Simonet, or madame Hotot, was one of this stamp: hers was a kind heart perverted; I met her at mother Bariole's. Mother Bariole, a good woman, if there ever was one, and as honest as it was possible in her profession, had a sort of consideration amongst the debauched beings who infest these places in double capacities; these revolting porticoes of a sanctuary, where, braving all disgust, lust and misery caress each other by turns. For nearly half a century her establishment was the providence and last refuge of those daughters of Laïs, whom the consequences of their fall from virtue, and time, so swift in his outrages, have cast headlong under the same control as the stream and the bank: it is the old seraglio, where no one must penetrate who desires to rejoice his mind by delightful images: here is no enchantress! The Armida of the Chaussée d'Antin is but a hideous trull, who, alternating between a prison and a hospital, exhausts, in her own person, the vicissitudes of a career—whose last hope must be to die on a dunghill. In this asylum, the luxury of the Rue Vivienne is superseded by the trumpery of the Temple: and she who, during the ephemeral triumph of her attractions scarcely budded, disdained the first fruits of the fashion, finds still wherewithal to deck herself in that faded finery, which, falling lower and lower, has, at length, reached the wardrobe of mother Bariole. Thus we see a broken-down *prad* of the hackney *drag* assume, with

pride, the harness which humiliated him in the days when his well-fed carcass formed the glory of a splendid equipage. If the comparison fails in nobleness of idea, it is just in fact.

It would be a curious history, and profitable to morality, to have the narrative of some of mother Bariole's nymphs: it might be to the purpose to add to it the biography of this venerable matron, who, placed for fifty years in the very centre of blows from fists, kicks from feet, thrusts from swords, &c., has passed through the whole period without a single scratch; the friend of the police, the friend of the thieves, the friend of the soldiery, in fact, every body's friend, she has preserved herself invulnerable in the midst of storms innumerable, and of the thousand and one battles of which she has been spectatress. Sabine or Roman when the combat commenced, woe to him who touched a hair of the *mother's* head! Her counter was like the holy arch, it was the neutral territory which even the flying bottles respected. This is, indeed, being loved! not one of the Sabines who would not have shed her blood for her. It was a glorious sight to see her in the morning, as they were all thronging round her to tell their dreams about the lottery; and at the approach of quarter-day, when the savings destined to pay the rent was insufficient, because the money-box had been broken open, the poor girls would work themselves ill to make up the deficit! What misery if the abbess, to satisfy her landlord, was compelled to *spout* her silver mugs! In what could she then warm the little sugared wine which she drank with her *Swiss*, or her gossip, when, chatting together, and deploring the hardship of the times, nose to nose, and with elbows on the table, they soothed their sorrows with a cup of comfort. This dear mother Bariole, how often she sent to the Mont-de-Piété for the militia of good conduct, (*bureau de mœurs*), to regale them with oysters and white wine! How generous the inspectors found her, and how compassionate the thieves! The confidence of the latter

she never betrayed. With what interest did she listen to the wailings of those who were *out of work*, and, sending a sprat to catch a herring, if she augured well of the fortune of any one of them, under the guise of friendship she handed over the cup of consolation; nay, even the *creature on tick*, if the unemployed *cracksman* was likely soon to be *flush*. "*Work*, my children," she said to the *labourers* of all classes, "to be welcome to me you must always be *doing*." She did not advise the soldiery in the same way, but gained their affections by attentions that were endless; she cursed the police with them, and to perfect their pleasure, in case of a disturbance, she never sent for the guard until the last extremity. She detested colonels, captains, adjutants, sub-lieutenants, in fact, all epaulettes; but then she doated on worsted lace, and nothing could equal her affection for subalterns in general, and particularly those who were well-looking: she was a mother to them all. "Ah, my darling!" I have heard her often say, "when you return with the serjeant you will be a major."

"Yes, mother Bariole, and between the hours of parade the house shall be merry."

Maman Bariole is still alive, but since I am not now called on to visit her, I know not if her establishment be supported on the same system. At the time I knew her, she had all the love for me which a spy could ever have expected from her. She was delighted when I asked for Emilie Simonet, who was her favourite. Mother Bariole thought I was about to throw the handkerchief in her harem.

"You cannot ask me for any one whom I would more readily give to you."

"Is she, then, your favourite?"

"What do you mean? I like women who take care of their children: if she had put them out of the way, I would never have looked at her again. Those poor little things did not ask to be born: why should not Christians have as much natural affection as animals?"

Her last is my godchild,—the very image of Hotot, the very *spit* of him. I wish you could see her, she grows like a mushroom; she will be no fool: there will be no occasion to teach her any thing; she will know every thing."

"She is forward, indeed."

"Yes, and pretty: a little love! let her only be until she is as old as a fifteen sous piece, and I know she will bring her mother in as much money as she can carry. With a daughter one always has a resource."

"Certainly."

"Yes, yes, the good God will bless her, Emilie; and then she has not, for a long time, had any mishap with the men."

"Does the good God meddle with these things?"

"Ah, certainly, you chaps are unbelievers, you believe in nothing."

"You have some religion, then, mother Bariole."

"I hope I have: I do not like priests, but that is all the same. It is not eight days since I had a nine days' devotion made at Sainte-Geneviève for a safe passage of some liquor from Brussels, and the butt arrived safe and sound."

"And the end of the wax candle, have you burnt that?"

"Hold your tongue, you heathen."

"I will lay a bet that you have some Easter cake at your bed-head."

"A little, my boy! people should not live like brutes."

Bariole, who did not like to be thwarted about her creed, began to call to Emilie.

"Come, make haste," she cried; "wait, my son, I am going to see if she has finished."

"That's right, for I am in a hurry." Emilie soon appeared with a corporal of artillery, who, without looking behind him, immediately took leave of her.

"Since he did not ask for his dram," observed Bariole, "we will put it back into the bottle."

"I will drink it," said Emilie.

"No, no, Lisette."

"You joke, it is paid for." (drinking.)

"Ah! there are flies in it."

"That will make your heart gay," I cried.

"So it will, well said. Is it you, Jules, what are you doing in this quarter?"

"I heard you were here, and said to myself, I must see Hotot's wife, I will have a drop with her."

"Agathe," called Bariole, "bring a pint;" and Agathe, according to custom, pretending to go down into the cellar, went out by the back door to the vintner's, whence she brought a flask, of which she reserved three parts, and, by baptizing the rest, obtained the quantity required.

"This is not adulterated," said Emilie to me, whilst I poured it out into her glass, "see, it makes bubbles on the top, which is a good sign; I will drink again."

I pleased her much by giving her plenty of drink, but that was only the first step towards gaining her confidence; and wishing to reach, insensibly, to the catalogue of her complaints against Hotot, I managed so skilfully, that the change of conversation did not give her any suspicion. I first began by deploring my own lot, and these girls, when lamentations are made which have any relation to their own, are never slow in joining chorus: I have seen many of them, before the second pint has been emptied, burst into tears and weep like Magdalenes; at the third, I became their best friend; then there was no further restraint, all that was heaviest upon their hearts came forth with a sudden explosion; it was that moment of overflowing confidence, when the exordium is always, "The world is full of troubles, every one has his own." Emilie, who had, during the day, tolerably well washed down her griefs, was not slow in commencing her tale of woe on the subject of her rival and Hotot's infidelities.

"Is he such a rover, your Hotot? fellows like him do not deserve to have wives. To leave such a woman

as you for a Félicité! between ourselves that Félicité is a ——; if I had to make a choice, I give you my word that I would give you the preference."

"Come, Jules, you are *buttering* me down. You are *trying it on!* I know well enough that Félicité is the better looking; but if I am not so *swell*, I have my heart in the right place. You saw it when I used to take the *scrax* to Lorcefé; (La Force;) that is the time to judge if one is true or not.

"That is true, you took every care of him, I was witness to that."

"Now, Jules, have I not done all a woman could do for him? The blackguard, one can scarcely keep one's temper! I did it to the injury of my trade. I am sure that no one could say a word against me; a married wife and all could not have done more."

"What is it you say? she would not have done so much."

"To be sure not, but it is not only that, he knows how disposed I am to have children—whilst he had been fifteen months in *quod* did I have a young one without him? Is not that virtue? and now he would deprive me altogether. My shoe knows what I have undergone, and would tell long tales if it could speak; did it not have those ten sous pieces which passed under the very nose of Bariolle? He ought to remember them; but cut off the rope from a rogue's neck and ——."

"You are right! It was not Félicité, then, who gave them to him?"

"Félicité! she would sooner have eaten him. But it is always those that they love best," (she sighed and drank, sighed and drank, sighed, and drank again.)

"Since we two are together, tell me have you seen them together lately? tell me the truth, and on the word of Emilie Simonet, which is my real name, may every drop which has entered, and shall enter my lips turn to poison, may I die on the spot, or may I be *nabbed*

when *easing* the next *cull* I make a *plant* upon, if I open my mouth to him about it."

"Why should I tell you? you women are all blabs."

"On my word and honour," (assuming a solemn air and tone,) "by the ashes of my father, who is as dead as you are alive ——."

This Homeric form of speech is no longer in use, except amongst the priestesses of Venus-Cloacina. Whence it came to them, I know not. Had some washerwoman's daughter sworn by the ashes of her mother,—but by the ashes of my father! The words are even more formidable than the prophetic nebulæ which alarmed Fontenelle: they comprise an entire monography. In the mouth of a woman who would seem to be honest, they are always a bad augury, whatever be her appearance or real situation; without running the risk of deceiving her, one can say, "I know you, beautiful mask." This oath, considering the quality of the persons who use it, has always appeared to me so burlesque, that it has never been uttered in my presence without exciting in me an irresistible impulse to laugh.

"Laugh away, laugh away," said Emilie to me, "it is laughable enough, is it not? Come, now, be quiet: it is true, there is no pleasure with him, he believes nothing. May I be the greatest wretch under the canopy of heaven; by all that I hold dearest in life; by the life of my child, which is an oath I never make; may all the miseries of life befall me if I speak of you to him." At the same time pulling forward the thumb of her right-hand, the nail of which, scraping against her upper teeth, escaped with a slight noise,—she added, crossing herself as she spoke, "now, Jules, it is sacred: now it is all as right as if a notary had signed articles between us."

During this conversation our pint measure had been frequently filled, and the more the Penelope of Hotot

drank, the more pressing she became, and the more solemnly pledged herself to silence.

"Indeed, my boy Jules, you should tell me, when I promise you that he shall know nothing of it."

"Ah! you are such a good wench that I can keep nothing from you; but I forewarn you, do not *nose*, if so, take care of yourself. I would not be the death of you, but Hotot is my friend, you know."

"There is no danger, and when any one tells me a thing (pointing to her breast) it is there—it is death."

"Well, then, I went this evening to the Champs Elysées and there saw your man with Félicité; they were quarrelling at first; she declared that he had you in his room in the Rue Saint Pierre aux Bœufs. He swore that he had not, and that he no longer kept up any connection with you. You know that when she was by I could not do otherwise than say as he did. They made it up, and, afterwards, from some words they let fall, I think he passed the night before last with Félicité at the Place du Palais Royal."

"Oh, then, you're wrong, for he was with his friends."

"With Caffin, Bicêtre, and Linois; Hotot told me that."

"What, did he tell you? He forbade my speaking of it: that is just like him, and then afterwards, if any accident should happen to him, he would *fan* me well."

"Oh, don't be alarmed; I am not the man to bring a friend into a scrape; if I am a spy, I have my feelings about me still!"

"I know, my dear Jules, that you were compelled to enter the police, or else return to the Bagne."

"It is all the same, police or not, I am all right still; and if I had any one to lay my clutches on, Hotot is not the man."

"You are right, my boy, never *snitch* upon comrades: and now, my lad of mettle, tell me, where did he go with the *mot*?"

"Do you wish to know? They went to *roost* at

Bicêtre's. I cannot give you the address, for I did not ask for it.'

"Oh! gone to Bicêtre! right as my hand, right as a *trivet*—I will go and stir them up."

"I will go with you—is it far off?"

"You know the Rue du Bon Puits?"

"Yes."

"Well! it is then at Lahire's, on the fourth pair of stairs. Now she shall carry my *ten commandments* in her face. Jules, have you a six liard piece? let me have it, that I may mark the soles of her feet with it.'

"I have not one."

"Never mind, I have my key in my handkerchief;—Oh I'll kick up a h— of a row. I thought something would turn up this morning, for I had three knaves in my hand of cards."

"Listen to me, don't be too much in haste. That will not be the plan to find if they be there or not. You can trust to me, let me have my way: if I remain, you will know what it means,—that I have found the birds at roost."

"That's a good idea, let us be sure before we begin to make an uproar."

We reached the Rue du Bon Puits, and I entered, when having assured myself that Bicêtre was in his lair, I rejoined Emilie, whose brain was actually turned by wine and jealousy.

"Well, now, see how unlucky we are! they have just left with Bicêtre and his wife, to go and sup at Linois's. I asked where, but they could not inform me."

"P'raps they would not; but that is of no consequence, none at all. I know where Linois *hangs out*, at his mother's. Come with me, you shall go and ask her, that they may have no suspicion of anything."

"Oh! you will take me from place to place till morning!"

"What, Jules, do you refuse me? Ah, my dear boy don't refuse, don't refuse, you shall have no reason to repent it—I will give you as many kisses as you like.'

How could a kiss, and such a kiss, be resisted? I went to the Rue Jocquelot, and then I climbed to the sixth story, where I saw Linois, who did not know my name.

"I am looking for Hotot," I said to him, "have you seen him?" "No," was the reply, and as he was in bed, I retired, after having wished him good-night.

"We have the luck of it! I have again been thrown off my scent: they have been here, but are now gone to seek for Caffin to *stand* some wine. Where does Caffin pitch his tent?"

"Why I should be puzzled to tell you, but as he is a petticoat hunter, I am sure we shall find him amongst the women in the Place aux Veaux. Come along."

"Why we shall traverse the four corners of Paris. It is getting late, and I have no time to spare."

"Pray, Jules, do not leave me, the inspectors will perhaps *grab* me."

As compliance was useful, I did not persist in my refusal. I went with Emilie to the Place aux Veaux, and, from *ken to ken*, taking draughts of courage in each cabaret, we flew onwards to the place where I hoped to perfect my informations. We flew, I say, though the expression is somewhat strong, in spite of the weight on my arm; Emilie, very much intoxicated, had much difficulty to put her feet on the ground. But the more she staggered, the more communicative she became, so that she disclosed to me the most secret thoughts of her faithless swain. I learnt from her all that I required to know concerning Hotot, and I had the satisfaction of convincing myself that I was not deceived in judging him capable of directing the thieves whom he proposed to give up to the police. Emilie hoping to find Hotot, and I to discover Caffin, when a girl named Louison la Blagueuse, whom we met, told us that he was with Emilie Taquet, and that he would pass the night either at Bariole's or at Blondin's, who was also an encourager of loves. "Thank ye, my little one," said Simonet to the sister cyprian, who gave us this welcome information,

"It is just so," she continued, "Bicêtre is with his wife, Linois and Caffin are with theirs, Hotot is with Felicité, every Jack has his Jill: the wretch! he shall have my life or I will have his; I don't mind being killed; (grinding her teeth and tearing her hair;) Jules, do not leave me, I will massacre them, my friend, I will massacre them!"

During this ebullition of vengeance, we were still going forward, until at length we reached the corner of the Rue des Arcis. "What are you doing, Melie?" grunted out a harsh voice, and a female approached us. "It is the petite Madelon," cried Emilie.

"Ah my lass! how are you? I am on the look out: have you seen Caffin this evening?"

"Caffin, do you say?"

"Yes, Caffin."

"They are at mother Bariole's."

No hour is unfitting that can be turned to its purpose. Besides Emilie was one of the house. We went in and learnt that Caffin was there, but that Hotot had not made his appearance. On this intelligence, Madame Hotot imagined that they wished to deceive her.

"Yes, you encourage his vice," she said to Bariole, "give me my man, you old ——."

I do not remember the epithets she heaped upon her, but there was, for a quarter of an hour, an incessant firing, supported by a succession of glasses of *tape* poured upon the wine which had already fermented jealousy to its height. "Will you cease with your bullying?" interrupted Bariole, who was an excellent trumpeter. "Your man! your man! he is at the mill, and the devil may fetch him. Did you put him into my keeping? He is a fine *kiddy*! Every body's man! Such fellows as he are to be picked up—. You think he is with Caffin, then go and see: go to Taquet's chamber."

Emilie did not allow her to say so twice, but went to convince herself, and returned. "Well," said Bariole, "are you satisfied now?"

"There is no one there but Caffin."

"Did I not tell you so?"

"Where is the brute, where is the monster?"

"If you like," I said to her, "I will take you to him."

"Oh pray do, I beg of you, Jules."

"It is a long distance from here, at the Hotel d'Angleterre."

"Do you think he is there?"

"I am sure of it; he went to pass an hour or two and wait until Félicité has finished her evening, and then he will go and meet her in the Rue Froid Manseau."

Emilie did not doubt but that I had exactly guessed the fact, and would not delay a moment; she was bursting with rage, but would give me neither peace nor quiet until I had consented to undertake to go with her to the Hotel d'Angleterre. The transit appeared long, for I was the knight of a lady, whose centre of gravity, vacillating excessively, gave me much trouble to keep my own equilibrium; however, half dragging, half carrying the belle, I reached the Rue St. Honoré, and the very door of the haunt where she trusted to find her man. We went through the rooms, and without fear of disturbing the amorous tête-à-têtes, glanced our eyes over each closet which was ranged on both sides of the corridor. Hlotot was not there, and the rival of Félicité was transported beyond bounds, her eyes were starting from their orbits, her lips covered with foam; she wept, she stormed, she was an epileptic, a demoniac; with dishevelled hair, pale, her features frightfully and spasmodically contracted, and the sinews of her neck stretched by passion, she presented the hideous appearance of one of those corpses to whom galvanism has restored motion. Terrible effects of love and brandy, jealousy and wine! Yet in the crisis which thus agitated her, Emilie did not lose sight of me, but clinging to my arm, swore never to quit me until she had unkennelled the ingrate who had thus tormented her.

But there was now no more that I wished to learn, and for some time I had been endeavouring to rid myself of her, and make her understand that I was going to inquire if Félicité had returned, which was soon done, as she lived in a house where there was a doorkeeper. Emilie, who had received so much complaisance from me, could but be pleased with my offer, and I went out without any attempt on her part to follow me; but instead of performing the commission I had undertaken, I went to the corps de garde of the Château d'Eau, when making myself known to the chief officer, I begged him to arrest and keep her in the closest confinement. It certainly pained me to push matters to this extremity, for after all she had evinced it will be agreed that Emilie deserved a better fate, but this night she certainly passed in the guard-house. How painful it is sometimes to perform strict duty! No one knew better than myself where was the beloved whom she was cursing; was I not necessarily deprived of the satisfaction of proving him innocent when she supposed him guilty? Perhaps, before I proceed further, it may not be useless to say why I had caused Hotot to be apprehended. It was that he might not have time to exculpate himself by the removal of all traces of his share in the robbery, or in bargaining for his safety with the police. But the tender Emilie, why imprison her? Had I not to dread her return to Bariolle's, where, in the loquacity of intoxication, she might utter reminiscences which would put Caffin on his guard? It may be objected that she was not in a state even to keep herself upright; I will not dispute that; but the reader must remember that, from the experience of children and drunkards, certain philosophers have been induced to think that men (and women of course included) were originally quadrupeds. Emilie, even on four paws, could have regained her domicile, and then her tongue would soon have returned, and my measures must infallibly have been betrayed.

After all these precautions, Hotot being already in my clutch, I had only to secure his three accomplices, and I knew where to prick for them all. I took two agents with me, and soon afterwards presented myself at Bariolle's in the name of the law.

"Ah!" said the mother, "when I saw you bring your body here, I feared all was not right. What will these gentlemen take?" she added, addressing my two aide-de-camps. "You will take something to be sure, what shall it be? from the small bottle that I keep for friends?" and whilst speaking, she stooped to rummage in her counter-drawer, whence she took, from amongst a parcel of millinery, an old gilt flask which contained the precious liquid. "I am obliged to hide it, or with these girls—ah! people are much to be pitied who have to deal with women. I vow, if ever I can get a means of living—how happy they are who have an income to live upon! See, I have not enough to provide myself with an arm-chair. Here is one like a skeleton, we can see its bones."

"Oh! come, tell us about your sofa; it has beautiful hair, and one leg in the air most gracefully," said a young girl, who, when we entered, was sleeping on a table in the corner of the room; "it is like Philemon and Baucis?"

"What, is that you, little Real? I did not see you. What are you chattering about with your *Philemus* and *Baucou*? What are you talking about?"

"I said," replied Fifine, "that it is like the Sybil's tripod."

"Good, good, it is the tripeman's arm-chair; you shall not say so of it any longer. I will have it new stuffed. You see she has had an education, and is not an ignorant beast like us: see what it is to have parents. But I know enough to enable me to carry on the war. Come come, Fifine, draw the cork of this bottle and have a drop."

"You are very kind, ma'am."

"Do not tell any of the others."

The glass was poured out, and a double row of pearls was formed on the surface of the Cognac.

"It is delicious; I say it is in the *Costico Barbaro*," observed Fifine.

"Well, gentlemen," resumed Bariole, "shall we leave a drop for the Capuchins? Fill, I drink to you. Here's to you my men; here we are all in perfect harmony, and yet we must die some day! It is so pleasant to agree when friends meet! Ah! my God, yes we must die, and that pains me, and yet we have all toil and trouble on this earth; it is too much for me, there is not a minute when the idea does not pass through my mind; but let us live honestly, that is the main thing, and then we can always walk with our heads up.—Let us not be led into temptation. In my case, die when I may, no one can reproach me with wronging them of the value of a pin's head. But what leads you here at this hour, my children? Not for my girls; they are all quiet; if you want a sample, look at her (*pointing to Fifine*.) But, by the by, Jules, what have you done with Melie?"

"I'll tell you presently; give us a candle."

"I will bet you want Caffin. Good riddance; I assure you he is a regular *fancy man*."

"And a woman thumper, too!" added Fifine.

"We don't often see the colour of his *blunt*," said Bariole. "See, Jules, on this slate is the expense and earnings of his wife; she cannot get enough for the fellow. If Paris could be cleared of such vagabonds, we should be better off." She offered to lead me to the *pensioner's* chamber, but as I knew the way as well as she did, I declined the offer. "The second door," she said, "with the key in it." I could not mistake, and entering the room told Caffin he was my prisoner.

"Well! well! what's the row?" said he, waking; "what, is it you, Jules, who have *nabbed* me?"

"What do you mean? I am no conjuror, and if you had not been *snitched*, I should not have come to disturb your sleep."

"What, at the old game, but it won't do; old birds are not caught with such chaff."

"Just as you please, it is your own affair; but if what they say be true your fortune is told—you are bound for a trip to the Bagne."

"Yes, believe that and drink water, you will never be full."

"Well then, if you must have it all to convince you, listen. I have no interest in *pumping* you. I repeat that I could not have guessed your haunt had I not been told that you *filched* some *double tripe* (lead) on the boulevard Saint-Martin, when you narrowly escaped the watch, or you would not have needed my visit. Are you *fly* now? Out of the quartette that made the gang, one has *blown the gaff*, guess the *nose* and I will tell you."

Caffin reflected for a moment, and then, lifting his head up like a horse who rears, "Jules," he said, "I perceive one of the party has *started*, take me to the *big-wig* and I'll make a clean breast on't too. There is no harm in *peaching* when others have *nosed* first. It is another thing with you, who are a spy by compulsion, for I know that if you could make a good hit you would give the police the go-by."

"As you observe, my boy, if I had known what I now know, I should not have been amongst them, but when our senses leave us we do many things we cannot undo."

"Where are you going to take me to?"

"To the station of the Place du Châtelet, and if you will tell the facts, I will inform the commissary."

"Yes, tell him to come, I will trap that —— Hotot, for it is only he who could have blown us."

The commissary came. Caffin confessed the crime, but at the same time did not fail to accuse Hotot, whom he pointed out as his only accomplice. He was not a false brother. His two friends showed the same friendship; surprised in bed, and interrogated se-

parately, they could not do otherwise than confess their guilt. Hotot, whom they accused of their misfortune, was the only one whom each inculpated. In spite of this nobility of feeling, worthy of being cited with the fine traits of "Active Morality," this generous trio were sent to the galleys, and the traitor Hotot accompanied them. He is now at the Bagne, where, most probably, he does but talk about the most curious particulars of his apprehension.

Emelie Simonet was released after six hours' captivity. When set free, she was half paralyzed by the bumpers she had quaffed; she could no longer understand, speak, or see, nor had she preserved the least recollection of what had passed. When the first ray of light broke in upon her, she asked for her lover, and on the reply of one of her companions that he was at La Force, "Miserable man!" she exclaimed, "what had he to do with taking lead from roofs, had he not all that man could wish for with me?" Afterwards, the unfortunate Emelie showed herself inconsolable, and the exemplary model of a grief that was daily poisoned; if in the morning she was only maudlin, by evening she was dead—drunk. Terrible effects of love and brandy, of brandy and love!

A theft of small extent has supplied me with an opportunity of sketching a hideous picture; and yet the sketch is but very imperfect and far from the abominable reality, from which the powers that be, who are bound to promote all that is good and civilized, will deliver us, when to them it seemeth best. To permit these sinks of corruption wherein the people plunge body and soul, and which are never closed, is an insult to morality, an outrage upon nature, and a crime against humanity. Let not these pages be accused as licentious; they are not the recitals of Petronius which add fuel to the already inflamed imagination, and make proselytes to impurity. I describe immorality, not to extend its influences, but to make them

abominated. Who that has read this chapter, is not horrified at the vices it depicts, since they produce the last degree of brutalization?

CHAPTER XXXIX.

I am fearful of my own renown—The approach of a grand fête—The classes of robbers—The rouletiers at the last gasp—A deluge of denunciations—I am nearly caught—The mattress, the false keys, and the crow-bar—The revengeful confession—The terrible Limodin—The mania for turning spy—The female thief who denounces herself—The good son—The unlucky fugitive—The twelfth-night king and queen—The treacherous kiss—The difficulty overcome—The washer-woman's basket—The stolen child—The umbrella which affords no shelter—The modern Sappho—Liberty is not the first of blessings—The inseparables—The heroism of friendship—Vice has its virtues.

WHEN an individual of passable intellect bends all his faculties to one point, it but seldom occurs that he does not become expert in his profession. This is the whole secret of my great aptitude for detecting thieves. The moment I became a secret agent, I had but one thought, and all my efforts tended to reduce to inaction as speedily as possible the wretches, who, desirous of perverting the resources of labour, seek a subsistence in a series of outrages on the right of property, more or less criminal. I did not delude myself as to the sort of success of which I was ambitious, and I had not the folly to think that I could effectually extirpate robbery; but by carrying on a war *à l'outrance* against offenders, hoped to render them less numerous. I may say, that the success of my first attempts surpassed the expectation of myself and M. Henry. In my own estimation, my reputation increased with too much rapidity; for reputation betrayed the mystery of my employ, and from the moment I was known, it was necessary either that I should renounce the service of the police, or else belong to it ostensibly. Thenceforward, my task became much more difficult, but obstacles

daunted me not, and, as I lacked neither zeal nor devotion, I thought it still possible not to destroy the good opinion which the authorities had conceived of me. I had now no chance of feigning with malefactors. The mask fallen, I was in their eyes a spy, and nothing but a spy. Yet I was a spy under better circumstances than the majority of my colleagues; and when I could not do otherwise than appear openly, yet my secret services of former periods profited me much, either by the connections I had formed, or by the vast number of facts and descriptions of all sorts that I had arranged and stored in my memory. I could then, like a certain king of Portugal, (but with more certainty than he,) judge of men by their looks, and point out to the police those dangerous persons who should be removed from society. The arbitrary power of the police at this period, and the faculty of administrative detentions, which formed its strong hold, left me a prodigious latitude for the exercise of my physiognomical knowledge, founded on positive experience. But, I thought that as it so greatly regarded the public welfare, I must not act with levity. Certainly, nothing would have been easier to me than to have filled the prisons; the thieves, and by this title all were denominated who had been committed for trial for any act contrary to honesty, were not ignorant that their fate was in the hands of the first as well as the last agent; and that to bring upon them a sentence of indefinite imprisonment at Bicêtre, only a statement was necessary whether true or false. Those particularly, who had been already in the hands of justice, were more exposed to the consequences of such denuncements, as no one took the trouble of minute inquiry: there were, besides, in the capital, a multitude of noted characters, of bad repute, whether merited or not, who were not treated with any greater consideration. This method of repression had serious consequences, since the innocent might be condemned as well as the guilty, the reformed confounded with the incorrigible. Certainly, when any feast or solemnity attracted a large

roncourse of strangers to Paris, that the streets might be somewhat cleared, it was very convenient to have what was called a *raffle*; but the ceremony over, of course they set at liberty those prisoners against whom there was nothing but presumptive evidence, and thus associations of crime were formed during incarceration, by the very means adopted to prevent it. He who, having withdrawn from his former course of life, had returned to an honest mode of existence, was compulsorily driven to vicious habits, and relapsed, in spite of himself, into his former ways. Another with a bad reputation, just about to adopt a different line of conduct, by being cast amongst these vile characters, and confounded with them, was lost without hope of return. The system adopted was most deplorable, and I planned another, which consisted not in apprehending the suspected, but catching in the very act those who were justly suspected. For this purpose, I classed the thieves according to the particular *branch of the profession* that each followed, and in each catalogue I took care so to arrange my information, that I might learn how they were severally engaged; so that not one robbery was committed but I was informed of it, and learnt the names of the perpetrators. Very frequently my spies, men or women, for I had them of both sexes, had shared in the crime; I knew it; but with a persuasion that they would, in their turn, be pointed out to me by some other false comrade, who would denounce them, I consented to their remaining behind the curtain, under a certain proviso.

Justice lost nothing from this tolerance; denounced or denouncers all reached the same termination—the Bagne; there was impunity for none. I certainly felt a repugnance at employing such agents, and particularly at being bound to keep silence concerning them, when I was convinced of their culpability, but the security of Paris prevailed over considerations purely moral.

“If I speak,” I said to myself, when I had business with a spy of this sort, “I shall convict a rogue, but if

I do not now spare him, fifty of his comrades, whom he is about to betray to me, will escape the punishment of the laws ;” and this calculation prescribed a line of conduct to me, which I followed up as long as it was useful to society. Between the thieves and myself hostilities were not less lasting ; I only allowed the enemy certain terms, and tacitly granted safeguards, safe-conducts, and truces, which died a natural death on the least infraction thereof. The false comrade becoming the victim of another false comrade, I had no power to interpose between the crime and the repression of it, and the perfidious delinquent fell, betrayed by a rogue not less treacherous than himself. I thus made thieves serve for the destruction of thieves ; that was my method, and it was excellent ; the proof is, that in less than seven years, I placed in the hands of justice more than four thousand malefactors. Whole classes of thieves were at bay, and amongst the number was those called the rouletiers, (who plunder baggage from travelling carriages ;) I was anxious to reduce them all to inaction ; I made the attempt, which was nearly fatal to me. I can never forget M. Henry’s remark on this occasion : “ It is not doing well only, but you must also give proof that you have done well.”

Two of the most daring rouletiers, named Gosnet and Doré, alarmed at my efforts to put a stop to their depredations, came to a resolution to devote their services to the police, and in a short time they procured the arrest of a great many of their comrades, who were all convicted. They appeared zealous ; I owed to their informations some most important discoveries, and particularly of several *fences* ; the more dangerous, as in business they enjoyed a reputation for honesty. After services of this nature I thought I could trust them ; I asked for their admission as secret agents, with an allowance of one hundred and fifty francs per month. They wished nothing more, they said ; their ambition was limited to the hundred and fifty francs per month.

I believed them, and as I saw in them my future colleagues, I evinced a confidence almost boundless; we shall see how they deserved it.

For some months two or three particularly adroit rouletiers had arrived at Paris, where they did not sleep. Declarations poured in upon the prefecture; they committed robberies with incredible audacity, and it was the more difficult to catch them in the fact, as they only went out at night, and as, in their expeditions on the roads round the capital, they were always armed to the teeth. The capture of such brigands must confer honour upon me; to effect it, I was ready to confront all peril, when one day Gosnet, with whom I had often conversed on the subject, said to me, "Jules, if you wish to catch Mayer, Victor Marquet, and his brother in the fact, there is but one way; you must come and sleep at our house, and then we shall be better able to go out at the proper hours."

I believed Gosnet was sincere, and agreed to go and instal myself immediately in the apartment which he shared with Doré, and we soon began to make our nocturnal explorations together on the route which Mayer and the two Marquets generally frequented. We frequently met them, but unwilling to seize them, except in the commission of some robbery, or at least with the spoil in their possession, we were compelled to let them pass. We had already made several of these fruitless tours, when I began to remark at my companions' domicile something which gave me cause of disquiet. There was somewhat of constraint in their conduct towards me, and they might (I thought) be plotting against me. I could not read their thoughts, but at all risks, I was never with them without being armed with a brace of pistols, of which they had no knowledge.

One night that we were going out, Doré suddenly complained of an attack of colic, which tormented him most excruciatingly; the pains became more and more severe, he was torn and bent double by them, and it was

evident that he could not go out in such a condition. The party was consequently postponed until next day and as there was nothing to be done, I laid down again and fell asleep. A few moments afterwards I awoke and jumped up, thinking I heard a noise at the door and repeated blows proved that I was not mistaken. What did they want? Was their business with us. That was not probable, for no person knew our retreat. One of my companions arose, I made him a signal to be still, but he got out of bed; then, in a low voice, I recommended him to listen, but not open; he went to the door, whilst Gosnet, who was in an adjacent chamber, did not stir. The knocking continued, and as a precautionary measure, I made haste to put on my drawers and waistcoat. Doré having done the same, returned to his post, but, whilst he was listening, his mistress gave me a look so expressive, that I had no difficulty in understanding it; I lifted up my mattress at the feet, and what did I see? a large bunch of skeleton keys and a crow-bar. All was now apparent, I saw at once through the plot, and to frustrate it, I hastened to place the keys in my hat, and the crow-bar in my drawers; then going to the door I listened in my turn; they were talking in a low tone, and I could not hear a word that passed; however, I conceived that so early a visit was not without its motive, and taking Doré into the second room, told him I would endeavour to ascertain who it was.

“As you like,” was the reply.

Some person knocking again, I asked who was there. “Is not M. Gosnet here?” some one inquired in a low tone of voice.

“M. Gosnet is below stairs, the door underneath.”

“Thank’ye, excuse our disturbing you.”

“Oh, there is no harm done.”

They went down; I opened the door without any noise, and at two jumps reached the privy, into which I flung the crow-bar, and was about to throw the key also, but some person entered behind, and I recognised

an inspector named Spiquette, belonging to the staff of the juge d'instruction, who instantly recognised me.

"Why do you follow me?"

"Oh, for nothing; it is M. Vigny, the juge d'instruction, who desires to see you, and speak to you."

"If that be all, I will put on my breeches and follow you."

"Make haste, let me take your place, and wait for me."

I awaited the inspector, and we went down together. The chamber was filled with gendarmes and spies; M. Vigny was in the midst of them, who instantly read to me a mandate, issued against me as well as against my hosts and their wives; then, to fulfil the instruction of his commission, he ordered the most exact search. It was not difficult to see through the whole affair, particularly when Spiquette, lifting up the mattress, and astonished at finding nothing, cast a peculiar look at Gosnet, who appeared stupified with amazement. His disappointment did not escape me. I saw that he was completely upset, and being myself quite reassured, I said to the magistrate,—

"Sir, I see, with the hope of making himself of importance, some person has overshot his mark. You have been deceived; there is nothing here to suspect; besides, M. Gosnet could not allow it. Would you, M. Gosnet? Answer to the judge."

He could not do otherwise than confirm my assertion, but only muttered out his words, and it required no conjuration to penetrate the bottom of his soul.

The search concluded, we were tied, put into two coaches, and conducted to the Palais, where we were placed in a small room called the *Souricière*, (rat-trap.) Shut up with Gosnet and Doré, I took care how I expressed my suspicions of them. At noon we were interrogated, and at evening were transferred, my two companions to La Force, and I to Sainte-Pelagie. I know not how it was, but the bunch of keys, which I kept in my hat, was not observed by any of the persons

at the prison gate. Although I had been searched, they were not found, and I was not sorry for it. I wrote instantly to M. Henry to tell him of the plot laid for me, and having no difficulty in convincing him of my innocence, I recovered my liberty two days afterwards. I repaired to the prefecture with the keys, so fortunately concealed from all investigation. I deemed myself lucky in having escaped the peril, for I was within an ace of destruction. But for Doré's mistress, and my own presence of mind, I should certainly have fallen once more under the jurisdiction of the argousins. With thieves' tools about me, I should have been overpowered by a fresh sentence, of which my situation as a fugitive would have supplied the motives, and I should have been sent again to the Bagne. M. Henry reprimanded me for an imprudence which had nearly been fatal to me.

"Where," said he, "would you have been had Gosnet and Doré prosecuted their plan a little more skilfully? Vidocq," he added, "mind yourself, do not carry your devotion to such an extent, above all do not put yourself into the power of these thieves; you have many enemies. Undertake nothing of which you have not maturely considered the probable result, and before you risk any important step in future, come and consult me." I profited by this advice, and reaped the benefit of it.

Gosnet and Doré did not remain long at La Force, and on their dismissal, I went to see them; I did not allow them to see that I suspected their treachery, but determined to have my revenge for a game which I had not lost. I let loose a spy upon them, and soon learnt that they had committed a robbery, of which all the proofs were easily producible. Apprehended and convicted, they had four years' leisure to think of me. When their sentence was passed, I took care to visit them, and when I told them how I had known and thwarted their plot, they wept with rage. Gosnet, taken back to the prison of Auray, whence he had escaped,

conceived a means of vengeance, which did not succeed. Feigning repentance, he sent for a priest, and under the pretence of a general confession, avowed the commission of various robberies, in which I was (of course) implicated. The confessor, to whom my pretended participation had not been communicated under the seal of secrecy, addressed the prefecture by letter, in which I was violently inculpated; but Gosnet's confession had not the hoped for result.

It was the despotism exercised over the thieves which propagated amongst them the system of denouncing each other, and to thrust them (if I may be allowed the expression) to the height of demoralization. Formerly they composed, in the bosom of society, a society apart, which included neither traitors nor deserters; but when they were proscribed *en masse*, instead of closing their ranks, they in their fright gave a cry of alarm, which rendered every expedient for personal safety legitimate, even to the injury of ancient faith. The chain which united the family of malefactors once broken, each made no scruple of denouncing his comrades to ensure his own safety. At the approach of particular periods, which were marked as convicting epochs, such as new year's day, the fête of the emperor, or any other ceremony, denunciations poured thick as hail upon the second division. To escape what the agents termed the *sweeping order*, that is to say, the order for apprehending all individuals reputed robbers, it was who should be first to furnish the police with useful information. There was no lack of suspected persons, who hastened to prove themselves liege subjects by turning spies upon their comrades, whose abodes were not known; and thus, ere long, the prisons were completely filled. We may justly imagine, that in these general *battues*, it was impossible to prevent a multitude of abuses: most iniquitous breaches of justice occurred, and frequently without chance of reparation. Unfortunate mechanics, who, at the expiration of a simple correctional punishment, returned to their trade, and endeav-

voured, by their good conduct, to efface the remembrance of past wrongs, were enveloped in the meshes, and confounded with thieves by profession : there was not the least chance of reclaiming them, for, confined in the depot, they were led the next day before the terrible Limodin, who compelled them to undergo an interrogatory. Such an interrogatory, gracious heaven !

"Your name, your residence ? You have been under sentence before ?"

"Yes, sir, but I have been at my trade since, and——"

"Enough—bring up another."

"But, Monsieur Limodin, I beg ——"

"Silence ! another ; I am understood, I hope."

The man on whom silence was imposed was about to allege reasons in his favour. Liberated for several years, he could produce testimonies of his honesty, and prove, by a thousand testimonies, that he had returned to laborious habits ; in fact, that he was irreproachable in every way : but M. Limodin had not leisure to hear him.

"I should never have done," he said, "if I am to have my time taken up by such chattering."

Sometimes in a morning this brutal interrogatory was carried on with such speed, that a hundred persons, men or women, were sent off, some to Bicêtre, and the others to Saint-Lazare. It was pitiless : in his eyes nothing could atone for a momentary error. How many poor devils, who had forsaken the paths of vice, have been thrown into them again by him ! Many of the victims of this implacable severity repented that they had ever betaken themselves to honest modes of life, and swore, in their rage, to become determined robbers.

"Of what use," said these unfortunates, "has been our return to the paths of rectitude ? See how we are treated : it would be better to have been a rogue always. Why make laws, if they are not observed ? Why were we condemned for a time, if they will not allow that we can be reformed ? It would have been better for us to have received sentence for life or death,

since, once again, having returned to the right road, we are not allowed to pursue it."

I have heard a thousand complaints of this kind, and all generally but too well founded. "I have been four years out of Sainte-Pelagie," said one of these prisoners to me. "Since my liberation, I have always worked at the same shop, which proves how steady I must have been, and yet they are not satisfied with me. Well! they have sent me to Bicêtre, although I have done no wrong, and only because I have undergone two years' imprisonment."

This infamous tyranny was doubtless unknown to the préfet, at least I would fain believe so, and yet it was done in his name. Open or secret, the agents were certainly very redoubtable personages, for their reports were received as true: if they arrested a popular man, and described him as a dangerous and incorrigible robber, which was the constant formula, all was settled; the man was convicted to a certainty. It was the golden age for the spies, since every one of these infringements on individual liberty was a prize to them; although this prize was not very extensive. They had a crown for each capture; but what will not a spy do for a crown piece, if there be no danger in the doing? Again, if the sum was small, they looked at the number, and endeavoured to repeat it. On the other hand, those thieves who desired to purchase liberty by their services, denounced equally, whether right or wrong, all those they had known. This was the condition on which they were allowed to remain at Paris; but the prisoners recriminating, they were in their turn compelled to bear them company.

No idea can be formed of the number of individuals whom these detentions have driven into lapses from honesty, which they would have avoided if this abominable system of persecution had been sooner renounced. If they had been left unmolested, they would never have done wrong; but whatever might have been their intentions, they were compulsorily placed in situations

for becoming thieves again. Some freed convicts (this is an exception) obtained, at the expiration of their sentence, leave not to be sent to Bicêtre *on suspicion* ; but even then they had no testimonials given to them, so that it was impossible for them to procure work. They had the resource of dying from hunger ; but people do not voluntarily resign themselves to so cruel a punishment : they could not die, and therefore plundered, and most frequently plundered and denounced at the same time.

This rage for turning spy made incredible progress ; the facts that prove it are so abundant, that I have no difficulty in selecting them. Frequently, in a scarcity of thefts to denounce to me, the spies revealed, whilst imputing them to others, crimes which should have led to their own condemnation. I will give instances.

A female named Bailly, an old thief confined at St. Lazare, sent for me to give information. I went to her, and she told me that if I would undertake to set her at liberty, she would point out to me the authors of five robberies, two of which were forcible burglaries. I agreed ; and the details she gave me were so exact, that I believed I had nothing to do but to perform my promise. But, on reflection on the various circumstances which she had narrated, I was somewhat astonished at the accuracy of her information. She had told me the persons robbed, one of whom was a Sieur Frederic, Rue St. Honore, passage Virginie ; I went immediately to him, and, in the course of conversation, learned that the denouncer was the sole perpetrator of the robbery committed on this man. I followed up my inquiry and was still more assured of my woman.

I had then only to proceed to the verification of the whole. The plaintiffs were taken to Saint Lazare ; when, without being seen by the woman Bailly, whom I showed them in the midst of her companions, they recognised her instantly. A legal confrontation then followed ; and Bailly, overwhelmed by evidence, made

confessions, which led to a sentence of eight years' confinement. She had all the time to say "*Meâ culpâ*." This woman had accused two of her companions of her robberies, and their suspected conduct might have led to their convictions. Another female robber, called La Belle Bouchère, having made similar disclosures to me as Bailly had done, was not more fortunate.

One Ouasse, whose father was subsequently implicated in the affair of Poulain, the grocer, pointed out to me three individuals as the perpetrators of a robbery, committed at nightfall, in the Rue Saint Germain l'Auxerrois, at a tobacco-dealer's. I went to the spot to acquire information, and soon obtained incontestable proof that Ouasse, recently liberated, was no stranger to the crime. I dissembled with him; but in making use of him I managed so well, that he was apprehended as an accomplice, and sentenced to close confinement. This mishap should have checked his mania for denouncements; but anxious at all risks to turn spy, he made, to the attorney-general of Versailles, several lying informations, which cost him two or three years' imprisonment.

I have already observed that thieves nourish no rancour; and scarcely had Ouasse been liberated, than he came to me, and again gave me information concerning a robbery. I went to verify the information, and found it true. But will it be believed? Ouasse himself was the thief, who, apprehended and convicted, was again sentenced. During his detention, this wretched man, having learnt the arrest of his father, hastened to address to me information in support of the accusation against his parent. It was my duty to transmit it to the authorities; and I did so, but not without experiencing all the indignation which the conduct of so denaturalized a son could create.

In my situation, I should have deprived myself of a most efficacious system of police, had I come to open rupture with the thieves. I therefore did not entirely keep aloof from them; and sometimes, when in full city

after them, I appeared still to take an interest in their fate. Was I dog or wolf? This was the doubt which I left in their minds; and this doubt, so favourable to calumny whenever I was accused of connivance, which in reality did not exist, was never manifest to them. This accounts for why the thieves were in some measure the contributors to that renown which I have acquired; they imagined that I was openly their enemy, but in fact only wished to protect them; and they sometimes even pitied me for being compelled to follow the business I did, and yet they themselves aided me in transacting it.

Amongst professed robbers, there were but few who did not consider it fortunate to be consulted by the police for information, or employed in some enterprise. Nearly the whole of them would have been cut into quarters to evince their zeal, under the persuasion that they thereby obtained, if not entire immunity, at least some little allowance. Those who most feared its powers were always most ready to serve it. I remember, as a case in point, the adventure of a liberated galley-slave, called Boucher, alias Cadet Poignon. For more than three weeks I had been on the look out for him, when by chance I met him at a cabaret in the Rue Saint Antoine, at the sign of the Bras d'Or (Golden Arm.) I was alone, and he was in a large company. To attempt to seize him *ex abrupto* would have been to risk a failure, for he could have defended himself, and ensured assistance. Boucher had been an agent of police. I had known him as such, and we were on very good terms together. It occurred to me that I would accost him in a friendly manner, and give him a specimen of my craft. On entering the cabaret, I went directly up to the table where he was sitting, and offered him my hand, saying, "Good day, friend Cadet."

"Ah, Jules, my boy, will you have any thing? call for a glass, or take mine."

"Yours is good; there is no gall on your lips. (I drank.) I want to say a word in your ear."

"With pleasure, old fellow; I am with you."

He rose, and, taking him by the arm, I said, "Do you remember the little sailor who was in the chain with you?"

"Yes, yes, a little fat, short chap, who was in the second string, wasn't he?"

"Exactly so, at least so I think. Should you know him again?"

"As well as if I saw my own father. I think I see him now, on Bench No. 13, making straps for the *covies' darbies*."

"I have just apprehended a chap, who I think is he, but am not sure. By chance I went to the guard-house at Birague, and as I went out saw you enter here. Parbleu! said I to myself, that is lucky; here's Cadet, and he will tell me if I am right or not."

"I am quite ready, my boy, if I can oblige you; but before we go, we will have a glass or two. My friends, (to his companions,) do not be impatient; it is only the affair of a minute, and I will be with you again instantly."

We started, and on reaching the guard-house door, politeness required that I should go first, and I did the honours. He went to the bottom of the room, looked sharply about him, but sought in vain for the individual of whom I had spoken to him.

"Where," said he, "is this *fugot* (galley-slave) that I am to look at?"

I was then near the door, and saw placed against the wall the fragments of a looking-glass, such as is usually found in most guard-houses for the use of the dandies of the garrison, and calling to Boucher, I showed him the shattered reflector.

"Here," I said, "look here."

He looked, and turning towards me, said,

"Ah, Jules, you are *chaffing* me. I see only you and myself in the glass; but the man, the arrested man, where is he?"

'You must know that there is no man arrested

here but yourself. See the order for your apprehension."

"Ah! this is a villainous trick."

"Don't you know that the most crafty man is he who prospers best in this world?"

"The most crafty, certainly; but it will do you no good to trap honest fellows in this way."

When the path to reach a discovery of importance was full of difficulties, female robbers were perhaps of more assistance to me than the males. Women generally find means of insinuating themselves, which, for the service of the police, is much more useful than the aid of males. Allying tact with finesse, they are besides endowed with a perseverance which leads them to the end desired. They inspire less distrust, and can introduce themselves every where without awakening suspicion. They have, moreover, a particular facility of introducing themselves amongst servants and portresses; they understand well how to establish communications, and to chatter without being indiscreet. Apparently communicative, even when they are most reserved, they excel in exciting confidence. In fine, strength excepted, they have in the highest degree all the qualities which constitute a fitness for being spies; and when they are in earnest, the police can have no better agents.

M. Henry, who was a clever man, often employed them in the most intricate affairs, and but rarely failed to have fortunate results. Following his example, whenever I have had occasion for the services of female spies, I have generally been satisfied with them. But as they are generally most corrupt beings, and more treacherous than the men, that they might not deceive me, I was compelled to be perpetually on my guard. The following anecdote will show that we must not always trust their zeal, of which they make great parade.

I had obtained the liberty of two celebrated female thieves, on condition of their serving the police faithfully. They had already given proofs of their skill in this way; but employed without salary, and compelled to plunder

for an existence, they were taken again in the very act of robbery. The sentence they underwent was that of which I abridged the duration.

Sophie Lambert and the girl Domer, alias La Belle Lise, were thenceforward in direct communication with me. One morning they came to tell me that they were certain of procuring the apprehension of one Tominot, a dangerous fellow, whom we had long been searching for. They were going, they declared, to breakfast with him, and he was to rejoin them in the evening at a vintner's in the Rue Saint-Antoine. Under other circumstances I might have been duped by these women; but Tominot had been arrested by me the previous evening, and it was a rather difficult matter for them to breakfast with him. I was nevertheless determined to try how far they would push the imposture, and promised to accompany them to their rendezvous. I went accordingly, but as may be supposed, no Tominot appeared up to ten o'clock, when Sophie, pretending impatience, asked the waiter if a gentleman had not inquired for them.

"Him you breakfasted with?" said he. "He came at dusk, and desired me to say that he could not be with you this evening, but would not fail in the morning."

I had no doubt that the waiter was an accomplice, who had received his instructions; but I evinced no suspicion, and determined on seeing what these ladies would do next. For an entire week they took me sometimes to one place, sometimes to another, where we were always to find Tominot, but who of course never appeared. At length, on the 6th of January, they swore they would lead me to him. I waited for them, but they appeared without him, and gave me such good reasons, that I could not be angry; on the contrary, I evinced much satisfaction at the measures they had adopted; and to prove how well contented I was with them, I offered to give them a twelfth cake. They accepted the offer, and we went to the Petit Broc, in the Rue de la Verrerie. We drew for king and queen,

and the royalty fell to Sophie's share, who was a queen in all her glory. We eat, drank, laughed, and when the moment of separation approached, it was proposed to consummate our gaiety by a few bumpers of brandy; but a vintner's brandy, stuff! It was good enough for the ladies of the fish-market; but I scorned to use my queen in that way. At this period I was established as a distiller in the Tourniquet Saint-Jean, and I offered to go to my house and fetch them a drop of the right sort. At this offer the party jumped for joy, and desiring me to return as quickly as possible, I set out, and two minutes afterwards I appeared with a half bottle of Coignac, which was emptied in a twinkling. The flask being dried, I exclaimed, "Come, I have been a good boy to you—you must now do me a service."

"Both, my friend Jules," cried Sophie; "let us see what it is."

"Why this it is. One of my agents has apprehended two lady thieves: it is thought they have at home a great many stolen articles; but to make the search we must find their abode, and they refuse to give it. They are now at the guard-house of Saint-Jean; if you go there you must try and *pump* them. An hour or two will suffice for you to *draw* them, and it will be easy work to two such deep baggages as you."

"Be easy, my dear Jules," said Sophie to me; "we will perform the commission. You know you can trust to us, and you might send us to the world's end if it could serve you; at least I can speak for myself."

"And for me too," said La Belle Lise.

"Well, then, you must convey a line to the officer on guard, that he may know you."

I wrote a note, which I sealed, gave it to them, and we went out together. At a short distance from the market of Saint-Jean we separated, and whilst I remained on the watch, the queen and her companion went to the guard-house. Sophie entered first, and presented the billet to the serjeant, who on reading it said,—

"All right, here you both are. Corporal, take four men with you, and conduct these ladies to the prefecture." This order was given conformably to a note I had sent to the serjeant on going out to get the brandy ; it was thus written :—

"Monsieur the officer on guard will send under sure and good escort, to the prefecture of police, the females Sophie Lambert and Lise Domer, apprehended by order of M. le Préfet."

These ladies must have made singular reflections, and doubtless guessed that I was wearied with being made their plaything. Be that as it may, I went to see them at the depot next day, and asked them what they thought of the trick ?

"Not bad," replied Sophie, "not bad ; we had not stolen though." Then addressing Lise, "It is your fault ; why did you pretend to seek for a man who was already caught ?"

"Did I know it ? Ah, if I had, I promise you—besides, what do you mean ? he is caught, and they can accuse him."

"That is all very fine : but tell us, Jules, how long will they keep us at Saint Lazare ?"

"Six months at least."

"Only that ?" they cried out together.

"Six months is nothing," added Sophie ; "it is soon passed. Well, my sweet lad, we are at the disposal of the préfet."

They had a month less than I had told them, and as soon as they were at liberty, came to bring me fresh informations ; and this time they were true. One remarkable peculiarity is, that female thieves are usually more incorrigible than males. Sophie Lambert could never persuade herself to renounce her habitual crime. From the age of ten she had entered on the career of theft ; and when only twenty-five years of age had spent more than a third of her life in prison.

A short time after my entrance into the service of the police I apprehended her, and she was sentenced to

two years' imprisonment. It was principally in furnished houses that she exercised her culpable industry: no one was more skilful in deceiving the vigilance of the porters, nor more fruitful in expedients to escape their questions. Once introduced, she halted at each landing to make a survey. If she saw a key in any door, she turned it without noise; and if the person who occupied the apartment was sleeping, no matter how lightly, Sophie had a hand still lighter, and in no time watches, jewels, money, all found their way to her *gibecière*, (game-bag,) the name she gave to a secret pocket under her apron. If the tenant of the room was awake, Sophie had excuses enough ready, declaring that she had made a mistake. Then if he awoke during the operation, without being at all disconcerted, she ran to the bed, and embracing him, exclaimed, "Ah, my poor little Mim, let me kiss you! Ah! Sir, I ask pardon. What! is not this Number 17? I thought I was at my lover's."

One morning a person, whose apartment she was ransacking, having suddenly opened his eyes, perceived her near his drawers. He made an exclamation of surprise, and Sophie immediately began to play her scene; but the gentleman was not to be deceived, and was determined to profit by the pretended mistake; if Sophie resisted, a sound of money produced by the struggle, might betray the motive of her visit;—if she yielded, the peril might be still greater.—What was to be done? for any other than herself the conjuncture would have been very embarrassing. Sophie was not cruel, and by the aid of a lie removed all difficulty, and the individual, satisfied with what passed, allowed her to retire. He only lost at this game his watch, his purse, and six spoons.

This woman was a daring creature: twice she ran headlong into my snares, but, after her liberation, in vain did I try to entrap her; there was no watching which she did not baffle, so completely was she on her guard. But what I could not effect by my utmost

efforts, to take her *flagrante delicto*, I owed to a circumstance entirely fortuitous.

Having left my home at daybreak, I was crossing the Place du Chatelet, when I met Sophie face to face. She accosted me with much ease. "Good day, Jules, whither are you bound so early? I will wager that you are going to catch some poor rook."

"Perhaps so; but certainly you are not the person; but where are you going?"

"I am going to Corbeil to see my sister, who is about to establish me in a house. I am weary of the *stone jug*. I am getting reformed; will you have a drop of *short*?"

"Willingly; I will stand treat, and we will have it at Leprêtre's."

"Well, do as you like, but make haste, lest I lose the diligence; you will go with me, wo'n't you? it is only in the Rue Dauphine."

"Impossible, I have business at La Chapelle, and am already late. All I can do, is to take a small glass standing."

We went to Leprêtre, and after a word or two, and a glass, I took my leave.

"Adieu, Jules, good luck!"

Whilst Sophie trudged away from me, I turned down the Rue de la Haumerie, and ran to hide myself in the corner of the Rue planche Mibray; there I saw her file off towards the Pont-au-Change, walking very fast, and looking behind her at every instant. I felt assured that she feared being followed, and thereupon determined to pursue her. I gained the bridge of Notre Dame, and, crossing it rapidly, reached the quai in time not to lose sight of her. On reaching the Rue Dauphine, she actually entered the office of the Corbeil coaches; but, persuaded that her departure was but a *ruse* to deceive me as to the intention of her early appearance, I ensconced myself in a corner, whence I could observe her motions. Whilst thus on the watch, a coach passed, in which I installed myself, and promised an

extra fee to the coachman if he would follow a female whom I should point out to him. For the moment we were stationary; the diligence started, but there was no Sophie there I would have betted my life; but some minutes afterwards she came to the office door, looked about on all sides, and then started off towards the Rue Christine. She entered into several furnished houses, and by her air I could perceive that no opportunity had offered, but as she persisted in exploring the same quarter, I drew the natural inference that she had not manœuvred successfully, and as I was persuaded that she had not yet finished, I took care not to interrupt her. At length she entered (in the Rue de la Harpe) a fruiterer's, and a moment afterwards appeared, carrying a large washerwoman's basket, which seemed heavy. She walked, however, very fast, and soon reached the Rue Mathurins-Saint-Jacques, and then that of Mâçons Sorbonne. Unfortunately for Sophie, there is a passage which communicates with the Rue de la Harpe and the Rue des Mâçons, and there, after having alighted, I hastened to hide myself, and when she reached the end of the alley I came forth, and we met face to face. On seeing me she changed colour, and attempted to speak, but was so much agitated that she could not utter a word. However, she came to herself gradually, and pretending to be in a great rage, said to me:—

“ You see a woman in a passion; my laundress, who was to have brought my linen to the diligence, failed in her promise, I have just fetched it from her, and am going to convey it to a friend; that has prevented me from going to Corbeil.”

“ Just my case; on going to La Chapelle, I met a person who told me that my man was in this quarter, and that brought me here.”

“ So much the better; wait for me, I am going a few steps hence with my basket, and we will have a clòp together.”

“ That I have no objection to; I —, but what do I hear?”

Sophie and I stood thunderstruck at hearing piercing cries issue from the basket ; I lifted up the linen that covered it, and saw—a child of two or three months old, whose roaring would have split the tympanum of a dead man.

“ Well ! ” said I to Sophie, “ the brat is yours, I suppose. Tell me, is it a girl, or a boy ? ”

“ Well, I am caught again. I shall remember this, and if ever I am asked why, I shall answer, oh nothing, a childish affair. Another time when I steal linen I will first look at it.”

“ And this umbrella, whose is it ? ”

“ Oh ! my God, yes—. As you see ; I had, however, wherewithal to shelter myself ; but when chance is against you it is in vain to attempt it.”

I conducted Sophie to M. de Fresne’s, commissary of police, whose office was in the neighbourhood. The umbrella was kept as a convicting evidence. As to the child, whom she had unwittingly carried off, it was instantly returned to its mother. The thief had a sentence of five years’ imprisonment. It was, I believe, the fifth or sixth sentence she had undergone ; she is still in the hands of justice, and I should not be surprised if she remains at Lazare for life. Sophie thought the trade she carried on a very natural one, and its repression, when unavoidable, she looked upon as an accident. Prison had no horrors for her, far from it ; she was, in a manner, in her sphere. Sophie had contracted those inclinations, more than strange, which are not justified by the example of Sappho of old, and under lock and key the opportunities of abandoning herself to these shameful depravities were more frequent ; it was not without a motive, as we see, that she had so little liberty. If she were apprehended, it caused her but trifling pain, as she consoled herself by perspective pleasures. This woman was a strange character, as we may judge. A woman named Gillion, with whom she lived in culpable intimacy, was taken whilst committing a theft. Sophie, who aided her, es-

caped, and had nothing to fear ; but unable to endure a separation from her friend, she had herself denounced, and was not happy until she heard the sentence read which was to reunite them for two years. The majority of these creatures make a sport of prison ; I have seen many, sentenced for a crime which they had committed alone, accuse a comrade, and she, although innocent, make a merit of resigning herself to her sentence.

CHAPTER XL.

Our friends our enemies—The jeweller and the clergyman—The honest man—The hiding place and the coffer—The blessing from heaven and the finger of God—Fatal intelligence—We are undone—The love of our neighbour—The cossacks are innocent—100,000 francs, 50,000 francs, 10,000 francs, or recompense in abatement—The false soldier—The pretended sprain—The cooper's wife at Livry—Local reputation—I am a Jew—My pilgrimage with the nun of Dourdans—The phoenix of women—My metamorphosis into a German servant—My arrest—I am imprisoned—The straw cutter—My entrance to prison—Strangers have friends every where—The church rat—The flesh-coloured coat—The buttons of my great coat—A drunkard's meaning—My history—The battle of Montereau—I have robbed my master—Projects of escape—Journey to Germany—The black hen—Confidence in the attorney-general—My release—Flight with an unfortunate companion—A hundred thousand crowns worth of diamonds—The *minimum*.

A SHORT time before the first invasion M. Senard, one of the richest jewellers of the Palais Royal, having gone to pay a visit to his friend the Curé of Livry, found him in one of those perplexities which are generally caused by the approach of our good friends the enemy. He was anxious to secrete from the rapacity of the cossacks first the consecrated vessels, and then his own little treasures. After much hesitation, although in his situation he must have been used to interments, monsieur le Curé decided on burying the objects which he was anxious to save, and M. Senard, who, like the other gossips and misers, imagined that Paris would be given over to pillage, determined to cover up, in a similar

way, the most precious articles in his shop. It was agreed that the riches of the pastor and those of the jeweller should be deposited in the same hole. But, then, who was to dig the said hole? One of the singers in church was the very pearl of honest fellows, father Moiselet, and in him every confidence could be reposed. He would not touch a penny that did not belong to him. For thirty years, in his capacity of cooper, he had the exclusive privilege of bottling off the wine of the presbytery, which was the best that could be procured. Churchwarden, sexton, butler, ringer, factotum of the church, and devoted to his vicegerent, for whom he would have risen at any hour of the night, he had all the qualities of an excellent servant, without including his discretion, intelligence, and piety. In so serious a conjuncture it was plain that they could not fix better than on Moiselet, and he was the chosen man. The hole, made with much skill, was soon ready to receive the treasure which it was intended to preserve, and six feet of earth were cast on the specie of the Curé, to which were united diamonds worth 100,000 crowns, belonging to M. Senard, and enclosed in a small box. The hollow filled up, the ground was so well flattened, that one would have betted with the devil that it had not been stirred since the creation. "This good Moiselet," said M. Senard, rubbing his hands, "has done all admirably. Now, gentlemen cossacks, you must have fine noses if you find it out!" At the end of a few days the allied armies made further progress, and clouds of Kirguiz, Kalmucs, and Tartars, of all hordes and all colours, appeared in the environs of Paris. These unpleasant guests are, it is well known, very greedy for plunder: they made, every where, great ravages; they passed no habitation without exacting tribute: but in their ardour for pillage they did not confine themselves to the surface, all belonged to them to the centre of the globe; and that they might not be frustrated in their pretensions, these intrepid geologists made a thousand excavations, which, to the regret of the naturalists of

the country, proved to them, that in France the mines of gold or silver are not so deep as in Peru. Such a discovery was well calculated to give them additional energy; they dug with unparalleled activity, and the spoil they found in many places of concealment threw the Crœsuses of many cantons into perfect despair. The cursed cossacks! But yet the instinct which so surely led them to the spot where treasure was hidden, did not guide them to the hiding place of the Curé. It was like the blessing of heaven, each morning the sun rose and nothing new; nothing new when it set.

Most decidedly the finger of God must be recognised in the impenetrability of the mysterious inhumation performed by Moiselet. M. Senard was so fully convinced of it, that he actually mingled thanksgivings with the prayers which he made for the preservation and repose of his diamonds. Persuaded that his vows would be heard, in growing security he began to sleep more soundly, when one fine day, which was, of all days in the week, a Friday, Moiselet, more dead than alive, ran to the Curés.

"Ah, sir, I can scarcely speak."

"What's the matter, Moiselet?"

"I dare not tell you. Poor M. le Curé, this affects me deeply, I am paralyzed. If my veins were opened not a drop of blood would flow."

"What is the matter? You alarm me."

"The hole."

"Mercy! I want to learn no more. Oh, what a terrible scourge is war! Jeanneton, Jeanneton, come quickly, my shoes and hat."

"But, sir, you have not breakfasted."

"Oh, never mind breakfast."

"You know, sir, when you go out fasting you have such spasms ——."

"My shoes, I tell you."

"And then you complain of your stomach."

"I shall have no want of a stomach again all my life. Never any more—no, never—ruined."

“Ruined—Jesus Maria! Is it possible? Ah! sir, run then—run—.”

Whilst the Curé dressed himself in haste, and, impatient to buckle the strap, could scarcely put on his shoes, Moiselet, in a most lamentable tone, told him what he had seen.

“Are you sure of it?” said the Curé, “perhaps they did not take all.”

“Ah, sir, God grant it, but I had not courage enough to look.”

They went together towards the old barn, when they found that the spoliation had been complete. Reflecting on the extent of his loss, the Curé nearly fell to the ground. Moiselet was in a most pitiable state; the dear man afflicted himself more than if the loss had been his own. It was terrific to hear his sighs and groans. This was the result of a love to one's neighbour. M. Senard little thought how great was the desolation at Livry. What was his despair on receiving the news of the event! In Paris the police is the providence of people who have lost any thing. The first idea, and the most natural one, that occurred to M. Senard was, that the robbery had been committed by the cossacks, and, in such a case, the police could not avail him materially; but M. Senard took care not to suspect the cossacks.

One Monday that I was in the office of M. Henry, I saw one of those little abrupt, brisk men enter, who, at the first glance, we are convinced are interested and distrustful: it was M. Senard, who briefly related his mishap, and concluded by saying, that he had strong suspicions of Moiselet. M. Henry thought also that he was the author of the robbery, and I agreed with both. “It is very well,” he said, “but still our opinion is only founded on conjecture, and if Moiselet keeps his own counsel we shall have no chance of convicting him. It will be impossible.”

“Impossible?” cried M. Senard, “what will become of me? No, no, I shall not vainly implore your suc-

cour. Do not you know all? can you not do all when you choose? My diamonds! my poor diamonds! I will give one hundred thousand francs to get them back again."

"You may safely offer double, for if the robber has taken due precautions, we can do nothing in the business."

"Ah! sir, you drive me to despair," replied the jeweller, weeping warm tears, and throwing himself on his knees before the chief of the division. "A hundred thousand crowns' worth of diamonds! if I must lose them, I shall die with grief. I beseech you to have pity upon me."

"Have pity,—that is easy for you to ask: but if your man is not excessively crafty, by setting some skilful agent to watch and circumvent him, we may perhaps obtain the secret from him."

"How shall I evince my gratitude to you? I care not for money: fifty thousand francs shall be the reward of him who succeeds."

"Well, Vidocq, what think you of it?"

"The affair is difficult," I answered to M. Henry, "but I will undertake it, and shall not be surprised if I come out of it with honour."

"Ah!" said M. Senard, squeezing my hand affectionately, "you restore me to life; spare nothing, I beseech you, Monsieur Vidocq; go to any expense requisite to arrive at a fortunate result. My purse is open to you, whatever be the sacrifice. Well, do you think you will succeed?"

"Yes, Sir, I do."

"Well, recover my casket, and there are ten thousand francs for you, yes, ten thousand francs. I have said it, and will not recede from my word."

In spite of the successive abatements of M. Senard, in proportion as he believed the discovery probable, I promised to exert every effort in my power to effect the desired result. But before any thing could be undertaken, it was necessary that a formal complaint should

be made ; and M. Senard and the curé, thereupon, went to Pontoise, and the declaration being consequently made, and the robbery stated, Moiselet was taken up and interrogated. They tried every means to make him confess his guilt ; but he persisted in avowing himself innocent, and, for lack of proof to the contrary, the charge was about to be dropped altogether, when, to preserve it for a time, I set an agent of mine to work. He, clothed in a military uniform, with his left arm in a sling, went with a billet to the house where Moiselet's wife lived. He was supposed to have just left the hospital, and was only to stay at Livry for forty-eight hours ; but a few moments after his arrival, he had a fall, and a pretended sprain suddenly occurred, which put it out of his power to continue his route. It was then indispensable for him to delay, and the mayor decided that he should remain with the cooper's wife until further orders.

Madame Moiselet was one of those good, jolly, fat personages, who have no objection to living under the same roof with a wounded conscript, and bore all the joking about the accident which delayed the young soldier at her house ; besides, he could console her in her husband's absence, and, as she was not thirty-six years of age, she was still at that time of life when a woman does not despise consolation. This was not all—evil tongues reproached Madame Moiselet with not liking wine—after it had been drank ; that was her local reputation ! The pretended soldier did not fail to caress all the weak points by which she was accessible : at first he made himself useful, and then, to complete the conciliation of the good graces of his hostess, from time to time he loosened the strings of his tolerably well-filled purse to pay for his bottle of wine.

The cooper's wife was charmed with so many little attentions. The soldier could write, and became her secretary ; but the letters which she addressed to her dear husband were of a nature not to compromise her—not the least expression that can have a twofold con-

struction—it was innocence corresponding with innocence. The secretary pities Madame Moiselet and commiserates the prisoner, and, to provoke disclosures, he makes a parade of that extensive morality, which allows of every means of enriching oneself; but Madame was too deep to be duped by such language, and constantly on her guard. At length, after a few days' experience, I was convinced that my agent, in spite of his talent, would draw no profit from his mission. I then resolved to manœuvre in person, and, disguised as a travelling hawker, I began to visit the environs of Livry. I was one of those Jews who deal in every thing,—clothes, jewels, &c. &c.; and I took in exchange gold, silver, jewels, in fact, all that was offered me. An old female robber, who knew the neighbourhood perfectly, accompanied me in my tour: she was the widow of a celebrated thief, Germain Boudier, called Father Latuil, who, after having undergone half-a-dozen sentences, died at last at Saint Pelagie. She had been confined for sixteen years in the prison of Dourdans, where the semblance of modesty and devotion which she assumed had caused her to be called *the Nun*. No one was a better spy over women, or could easier tempt them by the lures of ornaments and gewgaws. She had what is called the *gift of the gab* in the highest degree. I flattered myself that Madame Moiselet, seduced by her eloquence, and by our merchandise, would bring out the store of the curé's crowns, some brilliant of the purest water, nay, even the chalice or paten, in case the bargain should be to her liking. My calculation was not verified; the cooper's wife was in no haste to make a bargain, and her coquetry did not get the better of her. Madame Moiselet was the phoenix of women. I admired her, and, as there was no temptation which she did not resist, convinced that I should lose my time by attempting to play any stratagem off upon her, I resolved to try my chance with her husband. The Jew hawker was soon metamorphosed into a German servant; and under this disguise I began to

ramble about the vicinity of Pontoise, with a design of being apprehended. I sought out the gendarmes, whilst I pretended to avoid them; but they, thinking I wished to get away from them, demanded a sight of my papers. Of course I had none, and they desired me to accompany them to a magistrate, who, knowing nothing of the jargon in which I replied to his questions, desired to know what money I had; and a search was forthwith commenced in his presence. My pockets contained some money and valuables, the possession of which seemed to astonish him. The magistrate, as curious as a commissary, wished to know how they came into my hands; and I sent him to the devil with two or three Teutonic oaths, of the most polished kind; and he, to teach me better manners another time, sent me to prison.

Once more the iron bolts were drawn upon me. At the moment of my arrival, the prisoners were playing in the prison-yard, and the jailor introduced me amongst them in these terms, "I bring you a murderer of the parts of speech; understand him if you can."

They immediately flocked about me, and I was accosted with salutations of *Landsman* and *Meinheer* without end. During this reception, I looked out for the cooper of Livry. I thought he must be a sort of clownish looking tradesman, who, joining in the concert of salutes which were addressed to me, had called me *Landsman* in that soft silky tone, which is always acquired by those church rats who are wont to live on the meats of the altar. He was not over fat; but that was constitutional with him, and, his leanness apart, he was glowing with health: he had a narrow forehead, small brown eyes sunk in his head, an enormous mouth, and although, in detailing his characteristics, some of a very sinister kind might be seen, the whole had that gentle air which would tempt the Devil to open the gates of Paradise; besides, to complete the portrait, this personage was at least four or five generations behindhand in costume, a circumstance which, in a country where

the Gerontes can make reputation for honesty, always establishes a presumption in favour of the individual.

I know not why I had pictured to myself that Moiselet should have the refinement of roguery, which, to give itself the appearance of honesty, and to conciliate the confidence of old men, dresses itself like them. In the absence of other more characteristic signs, a pair of spectacles on a prominent nose, large buttons on a coat of light hue and square cut, short breeches, a three-cornered hat of the old school, and clocked stockings, would have instantly attracted my attention. The air and face were correspondent, and I had every reason to believe that I had guessed correctly. I wished to assure myself.

“ Mossié, Mossié,” I said, addressing the prisoner, who seemed to think I said Moiselet, “ now, Mossié Fine Hapit, (not knowing his name, I so designated him, because his coat was the colour of flesh,) sacrement, ter teufle, no tongue to me ; yer François, I miseraple, I trink vine ; faut trink for gelt, plack vine.”

I pointed to his hat, which was black ; he did not understand me ; but on making a gesture that I wanted to drink, he found me perfectly intelligible. All the buttons of my great coat were twenty-franc pieces ; I gave him one : he asked if they had brought the wine, and soon afterwards I heard a turnkey say,

“ Father Moiselet, I have taken up two bottles for you.” The flesh-coloured coat was then Moiselet. I followed him into his room, and we began to drink with all our might. Two other bottles arrived ; we only went on in couples. Moiselet, in his capacity of chorister, cooper, sexton, &c. &c. was no less a sot than gossip ; he got tipsy with great good-will, and incessantly spoke to me in the jargon I had assumed.

“ I like the German much,” said he ; “ you can remain here, my jolly Kinserlique.” And the jailor coming in to drink with us he desired him to make me a bea beside his.

“ Are you content, Kinserlique ?”

"As content as you."

"Do you trink much?"

"I trink altimes."

"Altimes! a good comrade;" and more wine was ordered in.

Matters progressed well; after two or three hours such as these, I pretended to get stupid. Moiselet, to set me to rights, gave me a cup of coffee without sugar; after coffee came glasses of water, No one can conceive the care which my new friend took of me; but when drunkenness is of such a nature it is like death—all care is useless. Drunkenness overpowered me. I went to bed and slept, at least Moiselet thought so; but I saw him many times fill my glass and his own, and gulp them both down. The next day, when I awoke, he paid me the balance, three francs and fifty centimes, which, according to him, remained from the twenty-franc piece. I was an excellent companion; Moiselet found me so, and never quitted me. I finished the twenty-franc piece with him, and then produced one of forty francs, which vanished as quickly. When he saw it drunk out also, he feared it was the last.

"Your button again," said he to me, in a tone of extreme anxiety, and yet very comical.

I showed him another coin. "Ah, your large button again," he shouted out, jumping for joy.

This button went the same way as all the other buttons, until at length, by dint of drinking together, Moiselet understood and spoke my language almost as well as I did myself, and we could then disclose our troubles to each other. Moiselet was very curious to know my history, and that which I trumped up was exactly adapted to inspire the confidence I wished to create.

"My master and I come to France—I was tomesic—master of mein Austrian marechal—Austrian with de gelt in family. Master always roving, always gay, goint regiment at Montreau. Montreau, oh, mein Gott, great, great pattle—many sleep no more but in death.

Napoleon coom—poum, poum go gannon. Prusse, Austrian, Rousse all disturb. I, too, much disturb. Go on my ways with master mein, with my havresac on mein horse—poor teufel was I—but there was gelt in it. Master mein say, ‘Galop, Fritz.’ I called Fritz in home mein. Fritz galop to Pondi—there halt Fritz—place havresac not visible; and if I get again to Yarmany with havresac, me rich becomen, mistress mein rich, father mein rich, you too rich.”

Although the narrative was not the cleverest in the world, father Moiselet swallowed it all as gospel; he saw well that, during the battle of Montereau, I had fled with my master’s portmanteau, and hidden it in the forest of Bondy. The confidence did not astonish him, and had the effect of acquiring for me an increase of his affection. This augmentation of friendship, after a confession which exposed me as a thief, proved to me that he had an accommodating conscience. I thenceforward remained convinced that he knew better than any other person what had become of the diamonds of M. Senard, and that it only depended on him to give me full and accurate information.

One evening, after a good dinner, I was boasting to him of the delicacies of the Rhine: he heaved a deep sigh, and then asked me if there were good wine in that country.

“Yes, yes,” I answered, “goot vine and charmong girl.”

“Charming girls too!”

“Ya, ya!”

“Landsman, shall I go with you?”

Ya, ya, me grat content.”

“Ah, you content, well! I quit France, yield the old woman, (he showed me by his fingers that Madame Moiselet was three-and-thirty,) and in your land I take little girl no more as fifteen years.”

“Ya, bien, a girl no infant: a! you is a brave lad.”

Moiselet returned more than once to his project of emigration: he thought seriously of it, but to emigrate

liberty was requisite, and they were not inclined to let us go out. I suggested to him that he should escape with me on the first opportunity—and when he had promised me that we would not separate, not even to take a last adieu of his wife, I was certain that I should soon have him in my toils. This certainty was the result of very simple reasoning. Moiselet, said I to myself, will follow me to Germany: people do not travel or live on air: he relies on living well there: he is old, and, like king Solomon, proposes to tickle his fancy with some little Abishag of Sunem. Oh, father Moiselet has found the *black hen*; here he has no money, therefore his black hen is not here; but where is she? We shall soon learn, for we are to be henceforward inseparable.

As soon as my man had made all his reflections, and that, with his head full of his castles in Germany, he had so soon resolved to expatriate himself, I addressed to the king's attorney-general a letter, in which, making myself known as the superior agent of the Police de Sûreté, I begged him to give an order that I should be sent away with Moiselet, he to go to Livry, and I to Paris.

We did not wait long for the order, and the jailor announced it to us, on the eve of its being put into execution; and I had the night before me to fortify Moiselet in his resolutions. He persisted in them more strongly than ever, and acceded with rapture to the proposition I made him of our effecting an escape from our escort as soon as it was feasible.

So anxious was he to commence his journey, that he could not sleep. At daybreak, I gave him to understand that I took him for a thief as well as myself.

“Ah, ah, grip also,” said I to him, “deep, deep François, you not spoken, but tief all as von.”

He made me no answer; but when, with my fingers squeezed together *à la Normande*, he saw me make a gesture of grasping something, he could not prevent

himself from smiling, with that bashful expression of *Yes*, which he had not courage to utter. The hypocrite had some shame about him, the shame of a devotee. I am understood.

At length the wished-for moment of departure came, which was to enable us to accomplish our designs. Moiselet was ready three whole hours beforehand, and to give him courage, I had not neglected to push about the wine and brandy, and he did not leave the prison until after having received all his sacraments.

We were tied with a very thin cord, and on our way he made me a signal that there would be no difficulty in breaking it. He did not think that he should then break the charm which had till then preserved him. The further we went, the more he testified that he placed his hopes of safety in me: at each minute he reiterated a prayer that I would not abandon him; and I as often replied, "Ya, François, ya, I not leave you." At length the decisive moment came, the cord was broken. I leaped a ditch, which separated us from a thicket. Moiselet, who seemed young again, jumped after me: one of the gendarmes alighted to follow us, but to run and jump in jack-boots and with a heavy sword was difficult; and whilst he made a circuit to join us, we disappeared in a hollow, and were soon lost to view.

A path into which we struck led us to the wood of Vaujours. There Moiselet stopped, and having looked carefully about him, went towards some bushes. I saw him then stoop, plunge his arm into a thick tuft, whence he took out a spade: arising quickly, he went on some paces without saying a word; and when we reached a birch tree, several of the boughs of which I observed were broken, he took off his hat and coat, and began to dig. He went to work with so much good-will, that his labour rapidly advanced. Suddenly he stooped down, and then escaped from him that ha! which betokens satisfaction, and which informed me, without the use of a conjuror's rod, that he had found his treasure. I thought the cooper would have fainted; but recovering

himself, he made two or three more strokes with his spade, and the box was exposed to view. I seized on the instrument of his toil, and suddenly changing my language, declared, in very good French, that he was my prisoner.

"No resistance," I said, "or I will cleave your skull in two."

At this threat he seemed in a dream; but when he knew that he was gripped by that iron hand which has subdued the most vigorous malefactors, he was convinced that it was no vision. Moiselet was as quiet as a lamb. I had sworn not to leave him, and kept my word. During the journey to the station of the brigade of gendarmerie, where I deposited him, he frequently cried out,

"I am done—who could have thought it? and he had such a simple look too!"

At the assizes of Versailles, Moiselet was sentenced to six months' solitary confinement.

M. Senard was overpowered with joy at having recovered his hundred thousand crowns worth of diamonds. Faithful to his system of abatement, he reduced the reward one half; and still there was difficulty in getting five thousand francs from him, out of which I had been compelled to expend more than two thousand: in fact, at one moment I really thought I should have been compelled to bear the expenses myself.

CHAPTER XLI.

The stolen looking-glasses—A fine young man—My four trades—The connoisseur—The Turk who had sold his odalisques—No accomplices—General Boucher—The inconvenience of good wines—The little Saint Jean—The soundest sleeper in France—The grand uniform, and the bank notes—The credulity of a fence—Twenty-five thousand francs burnt—The meddler—Capture of twenty-two thieves—The adorable cavalier—The father of all the world—What it is to be knowing—The Lovelace—The almoner of the regiment—Surprise at the Café Hardi—The Anacreon of the galleys—Another little song—I go to the Tuileries—A great lord—The director of the police of the Chateau—Explanations on the subject of the assassination of the Duc de Berri—The giant of robbers—Appear and disappear—A scene by Madame de Genlis—I am accoucheur—Synonymes—The mother and child are well—A matter of form—Baptism—No sugar plums—My gossip at St. Lazare—A suicide—The thieves' alley—The dangerous doctor—Fear benefits—I see old friends—A dinner at Capucin—The trap, the Bohémiens—An exploit at a duchess's—I recover the property—Two mountains never meet—The moral hump-backed lady—The fair of Versailles—The disturbed rest of a milliner—The bug bites and bug hunts—Love and tyranny—The window and the green curtain—Scenes of jealousy—I vanish.

A SHORT time after the difficult affair which proved so fatal to the cooper, I was employed to detect the authors of a nocturnal robbery, committed by climbing and forcible entry in the apartments of the Prince de Condé, in the Palais Bourbon. Glasses of a vast size had disappeared, and their abstraction was effected with so much precaution, that the sleep of two *Cerberi*, who supplied the place of a watchman, had not been for a moment disturbed. The frames in which these glasses had been were not at all injured; and I was at first tempted to believe that they had been taken out by looking-glass makers or cabinet makers; but in Paris these workmen are so numerous, that I could not pitch on any one of them whom I knew with any certainty of suspicion. Yet I was resolved to detect the guilty, and to effect this I commenced my inquiries.

The keeper of a sculpture-gallery, near the quinaux of the invalids, gave me the first information by which

I was guided. About three o'clock in the morning, he had seen near his door several glasses, in the care of a young man, who pretended to have been obliged to station them there whilst waiting for the return of his porters, who had broken their hand-barrow. Two hours afterwards, the young man having found two messengers, had made them carry off the glasses, and had directed them to the side of the fountain of the invalids. According to the keeper, the person he saw was about twenty-three years of age, and about five feet and an inch (french measure.) He was clothed in an iron-grey great coat, and had a very good countenance. This information was not immediately useful to me, but it led me to find the messenger, who, the day after the robbery, had carried some glasses of large size to the Rue Saint-Dominique, and left them at the little Hotel Caraman. These were, in all probability, the glasses stolen, and if they were, who could say that they had not changed domicile and owner? I had the person who had received them pointed out to me, and determined on introducing myself to her; and that my presence might not inspire her with fear, it was in the guise of a cook that I introduced myself to her notice. The light jacket and cotton night-cap are the ensigns of the profession; I clothed myself in such attire, and fully entering into the spirit of my character, went to the little Hotel de Caraman, where I ascended to the first floor. The door was closed; I knocked, and it was opened to me by a very good-looking young fellow, who asked me what I wanted. I gave him an address, and told him that having learnt that he was in want of a cook, I had taken the liberty of offering my services to him.

"My dear fellow, you are under a mistake," he replied, "the address you have given me is not mine, but as there are two Rues Saint-Dominique, it is most probably to the other that you should go."

All Ganymedes have not been carried off to Olympus, and the handsome youth who spoke to me had manners.

gestures, and language, which, united to his appearance, convinced me in an instant with whom my business lay. I instantly assumed the tone of an initiate in the mysteries of the ultra-philanthropists, and after some signs which he perfectly understood, I told him how very sorry I was that he did not want me.

"Ah sir," I said to him, "I would rather remain with you, even if you only gave me half what I should get elsewhere; if you only knew how miserable I am; I have been six months out of place, and I do not get a dinner every day. Would you believe that thirty-six hours have elapsed, and I have not taken anything?"

"You pain me, my good fellow; what, are you still fasting? Come, come, you shall dine here."

I had really an appetite capable of giving the lie I had just uttered all the semblance of truth; a two-pound loaf, half a fowl, cheese, and a bottle of wine, which he produced, did not make long sojourn on the table. Once filled, I began again to talk of my unfortunate condition.

"See sir," said I, "if it be possible to be in a more pitiable situation, I know four trades, and out of the whole four cannot get employ in one, tailor, hatter, cook; I know a little of all, and yet cannot get on. My first start was as a looking-glass setter."

"A looking-glass setter!" said he abruptly; and without giving him time to reflect on the imprudence of such an exclamation, I went on.

"Yes, a looking-glass setter, and I know that trade the best of the four; but business is so dead, that there is really nothing now stirring in it."

"Here my friend," said the young man, presenting to me a small glass, "this is brandy, it will do you good; you know not how much you interest me, I can give you work for several days."

"Ah! sir, you are too good, you restore me to life: how, if you please, do you intend to employ me?"

"As a looking-glass framer."

"If you have glasses to fit, pier, Psyche, light of day,

boy of Narcissus, or any others, you have only to in trust me with them, and I will give you a cast of my craft."

"I have glasses of great beauty, they were at my country-house, whence I sent for them, lest the gentlemen Cossacks should take a fancy to break them."

"You did quite right; but may I see them?"

"Yes, my friend."

He took me into a room, and at the first glance I recognised the glasses of the Palais Bourbon. I was ecstatic in their praise, their size, &c. ; and after having examined them with the minute attention of a man who understands what he is about, I praised the skill of the workman who unframed them, without injury to the silvering.

"The workman, my friend," said he, "the workman was myself; I would not allow any other person to touch them, not even to load them in the carriage."

"Ah! sir, I am sorry to give you the lie, but what you tell me is impossible; a man must have been a workman to undertake such work, and even the best he of the craft might not have succeeded."

In spite of my observation, he persisted in asserting that he had no help, and as it would not have answered my purpose to have contradicted him, I dropped the subject.

A lie was an accusation at which he might have been angry, but he did not speak with less amenity, and after having given me his instructions, desired me to come early next day, and begin my work as early as possible.

"Do not forget to bring your diamond, as I wish you to remove those arches, which are no longer fashionable."

He had no more to say to me, and I had no more to learn. I left him, and went to join my two agents, to whom I gave the description of his person, and desired them to follow him if he should go out. A warrant was necessary to effect his apprehension, which I pro-

cured, and soon afterwards, having changed my dress, I returned with the commissary of police and my agents to the house of the amateur of glasses, who did not expect me so soon. He did not know me at first, and it was only at the termination of our search, that, examining me more closely, he said to me:—

“ I think I recognise you, are you not a cook ?”

“ Yes, sir,” I replied ; “ I am cook, tailor, hatter, looking-glass setter, and, moreover, a spy, at your service.”

My coolness so much disconcerted him, that he could not utter another word.

This gentleman was named Alexandre Paruitte. Besides the two glasses, and two chimeras in gilt bronze, which he had stolen from the Palais Bourbon, many other articles were found in his apartments, the produce of various robberies. The inspectors who had accompanied me in this expedition undertook to conduct Paruitte to the depot, but, on the way, were careless enough to allow him to escape, nor was it until ten days afterwards that I contrived to get sight of him, at the gate of the ambassador of his highness the Sultan Mahmoud, and I apprehended him at the moment he got into the carriage of a Turk, who apparently had sold his odalisques.

I am still at a loss to explain how, in spite of obstacles, which the most expert robbers judged insurmountable, Paruitte effected the robbery which twice compelled me to see him. He was steadfast in his assertion of having no companions, for on his trial, when sentenced to irons and imprisonment, no indication, not even the slightest, could be elicited, encouraging the idea that he had any participators.

About the time when Paruitte carried off the glasses from the Palais Bourbon, some thieves effected an entrance in the Rue de Richelieu, No. 17, in the hotel de Valois, when they carried off considerable property, belonging to Marechal Boucher, valued at thirty thousand francs. All was fish that came to net, from the

plain cotton-handkerchief to the glittering uniform of the general. These gentlemen, accustomed to clear off all before them, had even carried off the linen intended for the laundress. This system, which has its rise in a desire not to leave a fraction of any thing to the person robbed, is very dangerous for the thieves, for it compels them to make minute researches, and occasions delays which sometimes terminate most unpropitiously. But on this occasion they had *worked* with perfect security; the presence of the general in his apartment had been a guarantee that they would not be troubled in their enterprise, and they had emptied the wardrobes and trunks with the same security as a broker who is making an inventory after a death. How, I shall be asked, could the general be present? Alas! he was—but when one plays an active part at a good dinner, can the result be doubted! Without hatred, without fear, without suspicion, we pass gaily from Beaune to Chambertin, from Chambertin to Clos-Vougeot, from Clos-Vougeot to Romanée; then after having thus overrun all the wines of Burgundy and discussing their various merits, we come to Champagne and the flatulent *Ai*, and but too happy is that guest, who, full of the joys of the delicious pilgrimage, does not get so far muddled as to be unable to find his way home. The general, after a banquet of this kind, had still preserved his reasoning powers entire, at least I think so, but he had returned excessively sleepy; and as in that state one is more anxious to tumble into bed, than to close a window, he had left his open for the convenience of comers and goers. What imprudence! I know not if he had agreeable dreams, but I remember, that in his statement of the transaction, he deposed that he had awakened from his sleep like a little St. John.

Who were the persons that had committed the depredation? It was not easy to discover them, and at the moment all that could be done or said with certainty was, that they had what is called the *toupet*, since they had disgracefully profaned the brevets of the go-

neral, in a way that must be guessed at, but cannot be mentioned, but which proved that they took him for the most profound sleeper in France.

I was very desirous of detecting the insolents who had perpetrated a robbery attended with circumstances so aggravating. In the absence of all indications by which I might endeavour to trace a path for myself, I allowed myself to be led by that inspiration which has so seldom deceived me. The idea suddenly struck me, that the thieves who had introduced themselves at the general's, might belong to the gang of one Perrin, a blacksmith, who had long been pointed out to me as a most audacious *fence*. I began by surveying the approaches to Perrin's domicile, which was in the Rue de la Sonnerie, No. 1; but after several days' watching, nothing occurred to guide me, and I felt convinced that to arrive at any satisfactory result, I must have recourse to stratagem.

I could not go direct to Perrin as he knew me, but I instructed one of my agents, who would not be suspected. He went to see him, and they conversed on various topics; at length, touching on robberies,—

"I' faith," said Perrin, "no bold hits are now made."

"What do you mean?" replied the agent. "I think those who were at the general's, in the hotel de Valois, have no cause for complaint; when I learn that in his full-dress uniform there was concealed a sum of twenty-five thousand francs in bank notes."

Perrin had so much cupidity and avarice, that if he had been possessor of the dress, this lie, which revealed to him riches of which he had not dreamt, would necessarily make an impression of joy, which he would be unable to dissemble; if the uniform had passed into other hands, and he had already disposed of it, a contrary feeling would betray itself. I had foreseen the alternative. Perrin's eyes did not sparkle, no smile was seen upon his lips; in vain did he seek to disguise his trouble, the feeling of his loss so sorely smote him, that he began to dash the floor with his foot, and tear his hair most

furiously : " Ah mon Dieu, mon Dieu !" he cried, " these events always befall me, must I be for ever wretched ?"

" Well, what do you mean ? Did you buy it ?"

" Yes, yes, I bought it, as you ask me, but I sold it again.

" Do you know to whom ?"

" Certainly I do : to a man in the Rue Feydeau, that he might burn the lace."

" Oh, do not despair, there is a remedy still left, if the melter be an honest man."

Perrin gave a jump. " Twenty-five thousand francs burnt ! Twenty-five thousand francs ! That is not picked up every day ; why was I in such haste about it ?"

" Well, if I were you, I should try to get back the embroidery before it is put in the melting-pot. If you like, I will go to the melter, and tell him that having had a good offer for it from one of the theatres, you are desirous of buying it back again. I will offer him a premium, and probably he will not make any difficulty about it."

Perrin thought the plan admirable, accepted the proposition with eagerness, and the agent, desirous of rendering him a service, ran to give me an account of what had passed. Then, taking search warrants, I made a descent upon the melter. The embroidery was untouched ; I gave them to the agent to convey to Perrin, and at the instant when he, impatient to seize on the notes, gave the first cut with his scissors to release the presumed treasure, I appeared with the commissary. We found at Perrin's evidences of the illicit trade which he carried on ; an abundance of stolen property was found in his stores. Conducted to the depot, he was examined ; but, at first, only gave very vague replies, whence no intelligence could be collected.

After his imprisonment in La Force, I went to see him, and ask him for information, but could only get from him some few indications ; he knew not, he asserted,

the names of the persons who constantly dealt with him. However, the little he told me aided me in forming suspicions that were plausible, and in converting my suspicions to realities. I had a considerable number of suspicious characters marched out before him, and, on his detection of them, they were put on their trials. Twenty-two were sentenced to irons, and amongst them was one of the authors of the robbery on general Boucher. Perrin was tried and convicted of receiving the stolen booty, but in consequence of the utility of the information he had given, only the *minimum* of punishment was pronounced against him.

A short time afterwards, two other *fences*, the brothers Perrot, in the hopes of clemency from the judge, followed the example of Perrin, not only in making confessions, but deciding several other prisoners on pointing out their accomplices. From their statements I brought into the power of justice two famous robbers, named Valentin and Rigaudi, alias Grindesi.

Never, perhaps, were there so many of those gentry, who unite the professions of thief and *chevalier d'industrie*, as in the year of the first restoration. One of the most skilful and most enterprising was Winter de Sarre-Louis.

Winter was only twenty-six, and was one of those handsome brown fellows, whose arched eye-brows, long lashes, prominent nose, and rakish air, have such charms for a certain class of females. Winter had, moreover, that good carriage, and peculiar look, which belongs to an officer of light cavalry, and he, therefore, assumed a military costume, which best displayed the graces of his person. One day he was an hussar, the next a lancer, and then again in some fancy uniform. At will he was chief of a squadron, commandant, aide-de-camp, colonel, &c; and to command more consideration, he did not fail to give himself a respectable parentage; he was by turns the son of the valiant Lasalle, of the gallant Winter, colonel of the grenadiers of the imperial horse-guard; nephew of the general Comte

de Lagrange, and cousin-german to Rapp ; in fact, there was no name which he did not borrow, no illustrious family to which he did not belong. Born of parents in a decent situation of life, Winter had received an education sufficiently brilliant to enable him to aspire to all these metamorphoses ; the elegance of his manner, and a most gentlemanly appearance, completed the illusion.

Few men had made a better *début* than Winter. Thrown early into the career of arms, he obtained very rapid promotion ; but when an officer he soon lost the esteem of his superiors ; who, to punish his misconduct, sent him to the Isle of Ré, to one of the colonial battalions. There he so conducted himself as to inspire a belief that he had entirely reformed. But no sooner was he raised a step, than committing some fresh peccadillo, he was compelled to desert in order to avoid punishment. He came thence to Paris, where his exploits as swindler and pickpocket procured him the unenviable distinction of being pointed out to the police as one of the most skilful in his twofold profession.

Winter, who was what is termed a *downy one*, plucked a multitude of *gulpins* even in the most elevated classes of society. He visited princes, dukes, the sons of ancient senators, and it was on them or the ladies of their circle that he made the experiments of his misapplied talents. The females, particularly, however squeamish they were, were never sufficiently so to prevent themselves from being plundered by him. For several months the police were on the look out for this seducing young man, who, changing his dress and abode incessantly, escaped from their clutch at the moment when they thought they had him securely, when I received orders to commence the chase after him, to attempt his capture.

Winter was one of those Lovelaces who never deceive a woman without robbing her. I thought that amongst his victims I could find at least one, who, from a spirit of revenge, would be disposed to put me on the

scent of this monster. By dint of searching, I thought I had met with a willing auxiliary, but as these Ariadnes, however ill used or forsaken they may be, yet shrink from the immolation of their betrayer, I determined to accost the damsel I met with cautiously. It was necessary, before I ventured my bark, to take soundings and I took care not to manifest any hostility towards Winter, and not to alarm that residue of tenderness which, despite ill usage, always remains in a sensitive heart. I made my appearance in the character of almoner of the regiment of which he was thought to command, and as such introduced to the *ci-devant* mistress of the pretended colonel. The costume, the language, the manner I assumed were in perfect unison with the character I was about to play, and I obtained to my wish the confidence of the fair forsaken one, who gave me unwittingly all the information I required. She pointed out to me her favoured rival, who, already ill-treated by Winter, had still the weakness to see him, and could not forbear making fresh sacrifices for him.

I became acquainted with this charming lady, and to obtain favour in her eyes, announced myself as a friend of her lover's family. The relatives of the young giddy pate had empowered me to pay his debts; and if she could contrive an interview with him for me, she might rely on being satisfied with the result of the first. Madame * * * was not sorry to have an opportunity of repairing the dilapidations made on her property, and one morning sent me a note, stating that she was going to dine with her lover the next day at the Boulevard du Temple, at La Galiothe. At four o'clock I went, disguised as a messenger, and stationed myself at the door of the restaurant's; and after two hours' watch, I saw a colonel of hussars approach. It was Winter, attended by two servants. I went up to him, and offered to take care of the horses, which proffer was accepted. Winter alighted, he could not escape me, but his eyes met mine, and with one jump he flung himself on his horse, spurred him, and disappeared.

I thought I had him, and my disappointment was great ; but I did not despair of catching my gentleman. Some time afterwards I learnt that he was to be at the Café Hardi, in the Boulevard des Italiens. I went thither with some of my agents, and when he arrived all was so well arranged, that he had only to get into a hackney-coach, of which I paid the fare. Led before a commissary of police, he asserted that he was not Winter ; but, despite the insignia of the rank he had conferred on himself, and the long string of orders hanging on his breast, he was properly and officially identified as the individual mentioned in the warrant which I had for his apprehension.

Winter was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment, and would now be at liberty but for a forgery which he committed while at Bicêtre, which, bringing on him a fresh sentence of eight years at the galleys, he was conducted to the Bagne at the expiration of his original sentence, and is there at present.

This adventurer does not want wit : he is, I am told, the author of a vast many songs, much in fashion with the galley-slaves, who consider him as their Anacreon. I append one of his productions :—

AIR.—L'Heureux Pilote.

Travaillant d'ordinaire,
 La sorgue dans Pantin,*
 Dans mainte et mainte affaire
 Faisant très-bon choppin,†
 Ma gente cambriote,‡
 Rendoublée de camelotte,\$
 De la dalle au flaquet ;||
 Je vivais sans disgrace,
 Sans regout ni morace,¶
 Sans taff et sans regret.**

* Evening in Paris.

† A good booty.

‡ Chamber.

§ Full of goods.

|| Money in the pocket.

¶ Without fear or uneasiness.

** Without care.

J'ai fait par complance*
 Gironde larguecapé,†
 Soiffant picton sans lance,‡
 Pivois non maquillé,§
 Tirants, passe à la rousse,||
 Attachés de gratouse,¶
 Combriot galuché.**
 Cheminant en bon drille,
 Un jour à la Courtille
 Je m'en étais enganté.††

En faisant nos gambades,
 Un grand messière franc,††
 Voulant faire parade,
 Serre un bogue d'orient.§§
 Après la gambriade,|||
 Le filant sur l'estrade,¶¶
 D'esbrouf je l'estourbis,***
 J'enflaque sa limace,†††
 Son bogue, ses frusques, ses passes,†††
 Je m'en fus au fourallis.§§§

Par contretemps, ma large,
 Voulant se piquer d'honneur,
 Craignant que je la nargue
 Moi que n' suis pas taffeur,||||
 Pour gonfler ses valades
 Encasque dans un rade,¶¶¶
 Sert des sigues a foison****
 On la crible à la grive,††††
 Je m' la donne et m'esquive,††††
 Elle est pommée maron.§§§§

Le quart d'œil lui jabotte |||||
 Mange sur tes nonneurs,¶¶¶¶

* An increase.

† Drinking wine without water.

|| Stockings. ¶ Lace.

¶¶ A gold watch. ||| Dance. ¶¶ Following him in the boulevard.

*** I stun him.

††† I steal his watch, clothes, and shoes.

§§§ The receiving house.

**** Steals money. †††† They call for the guard. †††† I fly.

§§§§ Taken in the fact.

¶¶¶¶ Denounces his accomplices.

† A handsome mistress.

§ Unadulterated wine.

†† Clad. †† Citizen.

††† I take off his shirt.

¶¶¶ Enters a shop.

¶¶¶¶ The commissary questions him.

Lui tire une carotte,
 Lui montant la couleur.*
 L'on vient, on me ligotte,†
 Adieu, ma cambriote,
 Mon beau pieu, mes dardants.‡
 Je monte à la cigogne,§
 On me gerbe à la grotte,||
 Au tap et pour douze ans.¶

Ma largue n' sera plus gironde,
 Je serais vioc aussi,**
 Faudra pour plaire au monde,
 Clinquant, frusque, maquis.††
 Tout passe dans la tigne,‡‡
 Et quoiqu'on en juspine.§§
 C'est un f—— flanchet,|||
 Douze longues de tirade,¶¶
 Pour un rigolade,**
 Pour un moment d'attrait.

Winter, when I apprehended him, had many associates in Paris, and the Tuileries was the notorious place where the most daring and celebrated thieves assembled, who recommended themselves to public veneration by impudently bedecking themselves with all the crosses of the orders of knighthood. In the eyes of an observer who can discern accurately, the Chateau was then less a royal residence than a haunt infested by these thieves. There congregated a crowd of galley-slaves, pickpockets, and swindlers of every class, who presented themselves as the old companions in arms of Charette, La Roche-Jaquelin, Stofflet, Cadoudal, &c. The days of review and court assemblies witnessed the gathering of these pretended heroes. In my office of superior agent of police, I judged it my duty to keep a strict look-out after these royalists of circumstances. I

* Tell a falsehood.

† My fine bed, my loves.

‡ They condemn me to the galleys.

• Old.

†† Rouge.

§§ Whatever people say.

¶¶ Twelve years of fetters.

† They tie me.

§ The dock.

¶ To exposure.

‡‡ In this world.

|| Lot.

••• Fool.

stationed myself in their way, either in or out of the apartments, and was soon fortunate enough to restore several of them to the Bagne.

One Sunday, accompanied by one of my auxiliaries I was on the watch on the Place du Carousel ; we saw, going out from the Pavillon de Flore, a person whose costume, not less rich than elegant, attracted the attention of every person. This personage must be a great lord : had he not been covered with orders, he would have been recognised by the delicacy of his embroidery, the grace of his feather, the sparkling knot of his sword ; but in the eyes of a police officer all is not gold that glitters. The agent with me, in drawing my attention to this splendid signor, observed that there was a striking likeness between him and one Chambreuil, with whom he had been at the Bagne at Toulon. I had seen Chambreuil, and I went to station myself so as to see this person face to face ; and in spite of the dress *à la Française*, the breeches *à l'Angleterre*, the laced neckerchief and ruffles, I instantly recognised the ex-galley-slave : it was, in fact, Chambreuil, a notorious forger, who had obtained much celebrity by his escapes from the galleys. His first sentence was about the period of the successful campaigns in Italy. At this time he followed the army, that he might the more easily imitate the signatures of the purveyors. He had a decided talent for this kind of imitation ; but having been too prodigal of his abilities in this way, he had ended by procuring for himself three years' imprisonment. Three years soon pass away. Chambreuil could not, however, reconcile himself to his prison ; he escaped, and fled to Paris, where he put into circulation a vast many notes of his own fabrication. This industry was converted into a crime ; and, again placed on his trial, he was found guilty, and sent to Brest, where, by virtue of his sentence, he should have passed eight years. Chambreuil again escaped ; but as forgery was his constant resource, he was apprehended a third time, and appended to the chain, which was sent to Toulon.

Scarcely had he arrived there, when he again endeavoured to elude the vigilance of his keepers ; but apprehended and sent back to the Bagne, he was placed in the too celebrated room, No. 3, where he passed his time, increased by three years.

During this detention, he endeavoured to amuse himself by dividing his leisure between denouncement and swindling, which were no less to his taste than his other pursuit. His choice, however, was forged letters, which, on his leaving the Bagne, brought on him two years' imprisonment in the prison of Embrun.

Chambreuil had just arrived there, when S. A. R. le duc d'Angoulême passing through this city, he caused a petition to be presented to this prince, in which he stated that he was an old Vendean, a devoted servant, whose royalism had drawn down persecution upon him. Chambreuil was immediately set at liberty, and soon afterwards began to use his freedom as heretofore.

When we recognised him, it was easy to judge by the figure he cut that he was in a good vein of fortune. We followed him an instant, to convince ourselves that it was indeed he ; and as soon as all doubt was removed, I accosted him, declaring that he was my prisoner. Chambreuil thought then to impose upon me, by spitting in my face a tremendous series of qualities and titles, which he asserted belonged to him. He was nothing less than director of the police of the Chateau, and chief of the royal stud of France ; whilst I was an insolent scoundrel, whom he was to punish instantly. In spite of threats, I persisted in making him get into a hackney-coach ; and as he made some difficulty about it, we compelled him by main force.

In presence of M. Henry, M. le director of the police of the Chateau was not at all disconcerted ; on the contrary, he assumed a tone of arrogant superiority, which actually alarmed the chief of the prefecture. They all thought that I had committed a blunder.

" I will never put up with such an audacious insult," cried Chambreuil ; " it is an outrage for which I will

have ample reparation. I will let you know who I am, and we will see if you will dare to use towards me those arbitrary measures, which even the minister would not venture to employ."

I actually thought the moment had arrived when they would apologize to him, and reprimand me. They did not doubt but that Chambreuil was an old galley-slave, but they were afraid they had offended in him some powerful man, on whom court favours were lavished. However, I asserted, with so much energy, that he was only an impostor, that they could not avoid giving a warrant to search his residence. I was to assist the commissary in this operation, at which Chambreuil was to be present ; and on the road he whispered to me,—

"My dear Vidocq, there are in my secretary some papers, which it is important to me to keep from inspection ; promise me that you will get them, and you shall have no cause to repent it."

"I promise you."

"You will find them under a double lock, of which I will tell you the secret."

He told me how I was to proceed ; and I found the papers in the place he had pointed out, which I kept to add to those which confirmed the propriety of his apprehension. Never had a forger so carefully arranged the materials of his swindling. There were found at his house a quantity of printed papers, some with this inscription, *Haras de France*, others with the *Police du Roi* ; sheets *à la Tellièrre* bearing the titles of the minister of war, statements of services, brevets, diplomas, and a register of correspondence, always open as if by accident, that any looker-in might the more easily be deceived,—were among the documents, proving the high functions which Chambreuil took upon himself. He was supposed to be on terms of intimacy with the most distinguished personages ; princes and princesses wrote to him : their letters and his were transcribed beside each other, and what appears very strange is, that he was in correspondence with the

préfet of police, whose reply was to be found in his lying register, on the margin of one of his missives.

The light afforded by the search so well corroborated my assertions respecting Chambreuil, that they did not hesitate sending him to La Force, there to await his trial.

Before the tribunal it was impossible to induce him to confess that he was a galley-slave, which I persisted in calling him. He produced, on the contrary, authentic certificates, which stated that he had not left La Vendée since the year 2. The judges were for a time in doubt how to decide between him and me, but I added so many and such powerful proofs in support of my assertions, that, his identity being recognised, he was sentenced to hard labour for life, and imprisoned in the Bagne of L'Orient, where he was not slow in resuming his old profession of denouncer. At the period of the assassination of the Duc de Berry, in concert with one Gerard Carette, he wrote to the police that he had information to give respecting this fearful transaction. Chambreuil was known, and not credited; but some persons, absurd enough to believe that Louvel had accomplices, demanded that Carette should be brought to Paris. This was complied with, and Carette came, but nothing was elicited from him which threw any additional light on the subject.

The year 1814 was one of the most remarkable of my life, principally on account of the important captures which followed one another. Some of them gave rise to most whimsical incidents, and as I am in a vein I will relate one or two.

During a period of three years, a man of almost gigantic stature had been pointed out as the author of a vast many robberies committed in Paris. By the portraits which the sufferers drew of this individual, he could be no other than Sablin, an excessively skilful and enterprising thief, who, freed from many successive sentences, (two of which were in fetters,) had resumed his old trade with all the experience of the prisons.

Many warrants were issued against Sablin, and the cleverest agents of police set upon him, but in vain ; he escaped all pursuit, and if they had notice that he had appeared in any spot, by the time they arrived no trace of him remained. All the police officers, being wearied by the useless pursuit of this invisible person, the task devolved on me to seek out and secure him, if possible. For fifteen months I neglected no opportunity of endeavouring to meet him, but he never made his appearance in Paris for more than a few hours at a time, and as soon as the robbery was effected he was away again without our being able in any way to trace him.

Sablin was in a manner known only to me, and I, therefore, was the person whom he most feared to meet. As he could see me afar off, he took good care to keep out of my way, and I never once got sight even of his shadow.

However, as lack of perseverance is not my fault, I at length learnt that Sablin had just taken up his residence at Saint Cloud, where he had hired an apartment. At this news, I set out from Paris so as not to reach there until nightfall. It was in the month of November, and the weather very bad. When I entered Saint Cloud, all my clothes were wringing wet : I did not take the trouble of drying them, and in my impatience to learn if I had been put on a false scent, I obtained, on talking about new comers, some news, which was that a female, whose husband, a foreign merchant, was five feet ten inches, (French measure,) had recently occupied a certain house pointed out to me.

Five feet ten inches (French) is not a common height even for Patagonians ; and I no longer doubted but that I had at last found the actual domicile of Sablin. But, as it was too late to present myself, I deferred my visit until the next day ; and that I might be certain that my man did not escape me, I resolved, in spite of the rain, to pass the night before his house. I was in ambuscade with one of my agents, and at break of day, the door being opened, I glided quickly into the house

that I might take a survey, and see if it were time to commence work. Scarcely had I put a foot on the first stair, when I paused,—some one was descending. It was a woman whose features and painful step betokened a state of suffering. On seeing me, she shrieked and went back again: I followed, and entering with her into an apartment of which she had a key, heard myself announced in these words, pronounced in accents of horror, “Here is Vidocq.” The bed was in an inner room, towards which I darted. A man was in bed—he raised his head—’twas Sablin;—I flung myself upon him, and before he could recognise me I had handcuffed him.

During this operation the lady, having fallen into a chair, groaned very bitterly; she writhed, and appeared tormented by horrid pains.

“What is the matter with your wife?” I inquired of Sablin.

“Do you not see that she is in labour? All night she has been in the same state. When you met her, she was going out to mother Tire-monde’s (the midwife).”

At that moment the groans redoubled.

“My God! my God! I can move no longer, I am dying; pray have pity on me: relieve my sufferings! give me help!”

Soon only half-choked sounds were heard. Not to be touched at such a situation would have evinced a heart of marble. But what could I do? It was evident that a midwife was needed, but who was to go in search of her? Two were not too many to guard a fellow of Sablin’s strength. I could not go out, nor could I determine on leaving a woman to die; and between humanity and duty, I was the most embarrassed man in the world. Suddenly an historical anecdote, well told by Madame de Genlis, occurred to me: I recalled to mind the “Grand Monarque” performing the office of accoucheur to Lavallière. Why, said I, should I be more delicate than he? Come quick a doctor: I am

one. I immediately took off my coat, and in less than twenty-five minutes Madame Sablin was delivered : it was a boy, a fine boy, to which she gave birth. I swaddled the infant, after having made this toilet of his first ingress or first egress, for I believe that in this instance the two expressions are synonymous ; and when the ceremony was over, on looking at my work, I had the satisfaction to find that both mother and child were doing “ as well as could be expected.”

Then I had to fulfil a form, the entry of the little newcome on the register of the civil magistrates ; we were all anxious : I offered to be subscribing witness ; and when I had signed, Madame Sablin said to me,

“ Ah ! Monsieur Jules, since you are here, there is another service you could render us.”

“ What ?”

“ I dare scarcely name it.”

“ Speak, if it be in my power——.”

“ We have no godfather ; would you be kind enough to stand for the boy ?”

“ Certainly, as well as another ; where is the god-mother ?”

Madame Sablin begged us to call in one of her neighbours ; and as soon as all was in readiness, we went to church, accompanied by Sablin, whose escape I had rendered impossible. The honours of this sponsorship did not cost me less than fifty francs, and yet there was no christening feast.

In spite of the vexation which Sablin necessarily experienced, he was so deeply penetrated by my proceedings, that he could not forbear testifying his gratitude.

After a good breakfast, which was brought to us in the chamber of the lying-in lady, I conducted her husband to Paris, where he was sentenced to five years imprisonment. Being master turnkey at La Force where he underwent his sentence, Sablin found in this employment, not only a means of living well, but also that of saving, at the expense of the prisoners and the

persons who visited them, a small fortune, which he proposed to share with his wife ; but at the period of his liberation, my friend Madame Sablin, who also had a partiality for the property of others, was expiating her crime at Saint-Lazare. In the isolation consequent on the incarceration of his mate, Sablin, like many others, turned to evil courses, that is, having one evening in his pocket the fruits of his savings, which he had turned into specie, he went to the gambling table and lost the whole. Two days afterwards, he was found suspended in the wood of Boulogne : he had selected as the instrument of his death one of the trees in the Allée des Voleurs.

It was not, as may have been seen, without much trouble that I was able to render Sablin up to justice. Certainly if all my searches had been of necessity as tedious and difficult, I could not have accomplished them : but success generally attended me, and sometimes was so close at hand, that I myself was amazed at it.

A few days after my adventure in Saint-Cloud, the Sieur Sebillotte, a vintner in the Rue de Charenton, No. 145, complained of having been robbed. According to his statement, the thieves had effected an entrance by climbing, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening ; had carried off twelve thousand francs in cash, two gold watches, and six silver spoons. There had been force used externally and internally. All the circumstances were so extraordinary, that the veracity of M. Sebillotte was somewhat doubted, and I was ordered to clear the affair up. A conversation I had with him convinced me that his complaint comprehended only plain facts.

M. Sebillotte was a landlord ; he was in easy circumstances, and out of debt ; consequently I could not detect in his situation a shadow of a motive which might lead me to believe that the robbery of which he complained was false ; and yet it was of such a nature, that, to commit it, the persons of the house must have

been perfectly well known to the thieves. I asked M Sebillotte what persons frequented his cabaret; and when he had mentioned some, he said,

“That is nearly all, except chance customers, and those strangers who cured my wife: on my word we were very lucky to have met with them! the poor thing had been suffering these three years, and they have given her a remedy which has done her much good.”

“Do you often see these strangers?”

“They used to come here, but since my wife is better, we only see them occasionally.”

“Do you know what they are? Perhaps they may have observed —”

“Ah! Sir,” cried Madame Sebillotte, who joined in the conversation, “do not suspect them, they are honest, I have proof of that.”

“Yes, yes!” added the husband, “she has proof, which she will tell you: you will hear. Tell the gentleman, my dear.”

Then Madame Sebillotte began her recital in these terms:—

“Yes, sir, they are honest, or I will be burnt alive. Well, you must know, it is not more than a fortnight ago, it was just a week after the term, I was counting out some money, when one of the females who is with them came in; it was she who had given me the remedy, from which I have had so much relief; and, I must tell you, she would not accept a sous for it, quite the contrary. You must suppose that I was very much pleased at seeing her; I made her sit down beside me, and whilst I was laying out the money in parcels of a hundred francs, she saw one on which was a large man leaning on two young ones, with a skin on his shoulders like a savage, holding a club: ‘Ah!’ said she, ‘have you many like these?’ ‘Why?’ said I. ‘Because, you must know, that is worth a hundred and four sous. As many as you have, my husband will take at that price, if you will lay them aside.’”

I thought she was jesting; but in the evening I was never more surprised than to see her return with her husband. We looked over the money together, and as we found amongst it three hundred pieces of a hundred sous, like those she had pointed out, I let him have them, and he gave me a premium of sixty francs. You may judge after that if they are honest people or not, since they might, if they had liked, have had their coin for coin."

By the work we know the workmen. The last sentence of Madame Sebillotte informed me what sort of people were those honest creatures whose eulogy she made; nor did I need more to be assured, that the robbery, the authors of which I sought to detect, had been committed by the Bohémiens. The matter of exchange was quite in their way; and then Madame Sebillotte, in describing them, only confirmed me more and more in my preconceived opinion.

I soon left the couple, and from that moment all dark complexions were looked at by me with suspicion. I was thinking how and where I should be most likely to fall in with some of the persons I wanted, when, passing along the Boulevard du Temple, I saw, seated in a cabaret, called La Maison Rustique, two persons, whose copper-hued skin and foreign look awoke in my mind reminiscences of my sojourn at Malines. I entered; who should I see but Christian, with one of his *pals*, whom I also knew. I went up to them, and presenting my hand to Christian, saluted him by the name of Coroin. He looked at me for a moment, and then, my features becoming known to him, "Ah," he cried, jumping on my neck with transport, "my old friend."

So long a period had passed since we met, that, of course, after the customary compliments, we had many questions to ask and reply to mutually. He wanted to know why I left Malines; and without intimating my intention to him, I trumped up a story which passed current.

"All right, all right," said he; "whether true or

not, I credit it : besides, I find you again, and that is the main point. Ah ! all our old cronies will rejoice to see you. They are all in Paris. Caron, Langarin, Ruffler, Martin, Sisque, Mich, Litle ; even old mother Lavio is with us ; and Betché too, little Betché."

" Ah, yes, your wife."

" How pleased she will be to see you. If you will be here at six o'clock the union will be complete ; we are to meet here, and go to the theatre together. You shall be of the party ; but we will not part now. You have not dined ?"

" No."

" Nor I either ; we will go to Capucin."

" If you like ; it is close at hand."

" Yes, only two steps, at the corner of the Rue d'Angoulême."

This vintner and cook, whose establishment bears a grotesque image of a disciple of Saint Francis as a sign, then enjoyed the favour of the public, in whose eyes *quantity* is always more valued than *quality* ; and then for the holiday keepers on Sunday and Saint Monday,—for those jolly fellows, who carry on the war the whole week, is it not very pleasant to have a place where, without faring badly or offending any person, they may appear in all sorts of garbs, with any growth of beard, and in every state of intoxication ?

Such were the advantages which offered themselves at Capucin's, without mentioning the large snuff-box always open on the citizen's counter, at the service of whosoever, in passing, wished to refresh his nostrils with a pinch. It was four o'clock when we installed ourselves in this spot of liberty and joy. The space was long till six o'clock. I was impatient to return to the Maison Rustique, where Christian's companions were to meet. After the repast we rejoined them ; there were six, in accosting whom Christian spoke in their peculiar language. They instantly surrounded, hailed, embraced, welcomed me with acclamation ; pleasure sparkled in their eyes.

“No play, no play,” cried the wanderers, with unanimous voice.

“You are right,” said Christian, “no play; we will go to the theatre another time; let us drink, my boys, let us drink.”

“Let us drink,” echoed the Bohémiens. Wine and punch circulated freely. I drank, laughed, talked, and carried on my trade. I watched their countenances, motions, actions, and nothing escaped me. I recalled to myself some indications furnished by Monsieur and Madame Sebillotte; and the history of the hundred sous pieces, which had only been the first slight groundwork of a conjecture, became the basis of confirmed conviction.

Christian, or his mates, I could no longer doubt were the authors of the robbery announced to the police. How did I commend the casual glance made so à propos at the interior of *La Maison Rustique*! But it was not all to have detected the guilty; I waited until their brains were properly heated by the alcoholic applications; and when the whole party was in a state when one candle was enough to show two persons, I went out, and, running hastily to the *Theatre de la Gaité*, informed the officer on duty that I was with some thieves, and arranged with him that in an hour or two at latest he should apprehend us all, men and women.

These instructions given, I returned quickly. My absence had not been remarked; but at ten o'clock the house was visited, the peace-officer presented himself, and with him a formidable body of gendarmes and agents. They secured each of us separately, and then conducted us to the guard-house.

The commissary had preceded us; he ordered a general search. Christian, who called himself Hirsch, in vain endeavoured to conceal M. Sebillotte's six silver spoons; and his companion, Madame Villemain, (the title the lady gave herself,) could not preserve in secret, from the rigid search she underwent, the two gold watches mentioned in the complaint. The others were

also compelled to produce money and jewels, which were taken from them.

I was anxious to know the opinion of my ancient comrades on this matter. I thought I read in their eyes that they did not in the least distrust me; nor was I mistaken, for scarcely had we reached the violon, (the watch-house,) than they made me excuses for having been the involuntary cause of my arrest.

"It was not purposely done," said Christian, "but who the devil could have expected such a thing? You were quite right to say you knew nothing about us: be quiet, and we will not say a word to the contrary; and, as nothing has been found on your person to put you in any danger, you may be certain they will not long detain you."

Christian then recommended discretion to me, as to his real name, as well as those of his companions:

"Although," he added, "the recommendation is superfluous, since you are not less interested than we, in keeping silence on this score."

"I offered to the gipsies to use the first moments of my liberty in their service; and in the hope that I should not be kept long in durance, they told me their domicile, so that in getting out I might inform their comrades. About midnight the commissary sent for me, under pretence of examining me, and we instantly went to the *Marché Lenoir*, where dwelt the famous *Duchesse* and three other *pals* of Christian, whom we apprehended by virtue of a warrant, and after a search, which produced all necessary proofs for their conviction.

This band consisted of twelve persons, six men and six women; they were all condemned, the former to irons, the latter to close confinement. The vintner of the *Rue de Charenton* recovered his jewellery, plate, and the greater portion of his money.

Madame Sebillotte was overjoyed. The specific of the *Bohémiens* had the effect of rendering her health less precarious, the information of the twelve thousand francs regained perfectly restored it, and doubtless the

experience she had was not lost upon her; she remembered that, once in her life, she had nearly been a great loser, by having sold five-franc pieces for a hundred and four sous. "A burnt child dreads the fire."

This meeting with the Bohémiens was almost miraculous; but in the course of eighteen years that I have been attached to the police, it has happened more than once that I have been casually brought in contact with persons whom in my early days I had known.

A propos of occurrences of this kind, I cannot resist the desire of mentioning in this chapter one of the thousand absurd complaints which it was my lot to receive daily; this in particular procured for me a very singular renewal of acquaintance.

One morning whilst I was occupied in drawing up a report, I was told that a lady of respectable appearance desired to see me; she has, was added, to speak with you on an affair of importance. I ordered that she should be admitted instantly. She entered.

"I have to beg pardon for disturbing you; you are Monsieur Vidocq? It is to Monsieur Vidocq that I have the honour of addressing myself?"

"Yes, madame; and in what can I be of service to you?"

"Oh, you can aid me materially, sir; you can restore to me appetite and sleep. I neither rest nor eat.—Ah, how wretched is it to be gifted with excessive sensibility. Ah! sir, how I pity persons of our sentiment! I swear to you that it is the most distressing qualification that Heaven can bestow!—He was so well brought up, so interesting.—If you had known him you could not have forborne loving him—Poor dear!

"But, madame, condescend to explain: you may perhaps suffer by a causeless delay, and lose precious time."

"He was my only comfort—"

"Well, madame, what is it?"

"I have not power to tell you."

She put her hand into her reticule, and thence pro-

duced a paper which she gave me with averted eyes, saying, "Read, read."

"These are printed papers you have given me; you must have made some mistake."

"Would that I did, sir; would to heaven that I did. I beseech you to cast your eyes over the number 32,740; my grief forbids me to utter more! Ah! how cruel is my fate.—(Tears fell from her eyes, the word expired upon her lips, she was convulsed by sobs, and could with apparent difficulty prevent them suffocating her.) I am strangled! I am choking! I feel something swelling in my throat.—Ah! ah! ah! ah!"

I handed a seat to the lady, and whilst she abandoned herself to her sorrow, I turned over two or three leaves, until I reached No. 32,740, under the head of lost property; the page was moist with tears; I read:

"A small spaniel, with long silvery silky hair, dropping ears; he is perfectly trimmed; a mark of fire above each eye: physiognomy excessively animated, the tail trumpet-fashion, forming the bird of paradise. His natural disposition is very endearing; will eat nothing but the white of a chicken, and answers to the name of Garçon, pronounced with mildness. His mistress is in despair; fifty francs reward will be given to whosoever will bring him to the Rue de Turenne, No. 23."

"Well, madame! what am I to do for Garçon? Dogs are not under my control. I see that he was a most amiable creature."

"Ah! sir, amiable! that is the exact word," sighed the lady, in accents that penetrated the very heart; "and his intelligence could not be surpassed; he never left me.—Dearest Garçon! Would you believe it, that during the holy exercises, he had a more devout look than myself? In truth, he was generally admired, his appearance alone was a lesson to mankind.—Alas! alas! on Sunday last we were going together to the sacrament, I was carrying him under my arm; you know

these little creatures have perpetual wants—at the moment we were entering the church, I put him on the ground, that he might do as he wished; I went onwards, not to disturb him, and when I returned—no Garçon.—I called Garçon, Garçon!—he had disappeared. I left the Benedictine to run after him; and—judge of my misery—I could not find him. This is the business that has induced me to trouble you to day, to entreat that you would have the excessive kindness to have a search made for him. I will pay all that is needful; but take care he is not ill used. I am sure the fault has not been his.”

“Indeed, madame, whether he is in fault or not is no concern of mine; your complaint is not of that nature to which I am allowed to attend; if we were to give our time to dogs, cats, and birds, there would be endless work.”

“Well, sir; since you take that tone, I shall address his excellency. If there is no respect shown to persons who think well—Do you know I belong to the congregation, and that—”

“You may belong to the devil for me—”

I could not finish my speech: a deformity which I observed suddenly in the devout mistress of Garçon, produced from me a sudden fit of laughter, which entirely disconcerted her.

“Am not I an object of mirth?” said she, “laugh away, sir, laugh away.”

When my sudden gaiety had a little abated, I said:—

“Forgive, madame, this impulse, which I could not control; I did not know at first with whom I was conversing, but now I know how I should behave. Do you really deplore the loss of Garçon?”

“Ah! sir, I cannot survive it.”

“You have never then experienced a loss which more sensibly affected you?”

“No, sir.”

“Yet you have had a husband in this world, you had a son, you have had lovers—”

"I, sir! how dare you—"

"Yes, Madame Duflos, you have had lovers; you have really had them. Do you remember a certain night at Versailles?"

At these words she looked at me attentively for a moment; the colour came to her cheek.

"Eugene!" she cried, and instantly hastened from the room.

Madame Duflos was a milliner whose clerk I had been for some time, when, to hide from the search of the police at Arras, I had concealed myself in Paris. She was a droll sort of woman; she had a fine head, bold eye, good eyebrow, majestic forehead; her mouth, elevated at the corners, was large, but adorned with thirty-two teeth of dazzling whiteness; hair of a beautiful black, and aquiline nose, above a tolerably well-furnished moustache, gave to her physiognomy an air which would have been imposing, if her bosom placed between two humps, and her neck plunged into these double shoulders had not suggested the idea of a female Punch.

She was about forty when I first saw her: her appearance was most studiously attended to, and she gave herself the airs of a queen; but from the height of the chair whereon she was perched, so that her knees were elevated above the counter, she seemed less like a Semiramis than the grotesque idol of some Indian pagoda. When I saw her on this species of throne, I had much difficulty to be serious; but I preserved the gravity which circumstances demanded, and had just sufficient command over myself to convert into salutations of the most respectful kind a strong disposition to do entirely otherwise. Madame Duflos took from her bosom a large eye-glass, through which she viewed me, and when she had taken my dimensions from head to foot,

"What is your pleasure, sir?" she said.

I was about to reply, but a clerk who had undertaken to present me, having told her that I was the young man of whom he had spoken, she looked at me again,

and asked me what I knew of business. Of business I was utterly ignorant; I was silent; she repeated the question, and as she evinced some impatience, I was forced to explain.

"Madame," I said, "I know nothing of the business of fashions, but with zeal and perseverance, I hope to give you satisfaction, particularly if assisted by your advice."

"Well, I like that; I wish people to be frank with me. I receive you; you shall fill Theodore's situation."

"I am at your orders as soon as you please, madame."

"Well, then, I engage you at once; from this very day you may begin on trial."

My installation was at once effected. In my situation as junior clerk, I had the task of arranging the magazine and work-room, where about twenty young girls, all very pretty, were employed in fashioning gewgaws, destined to tempt the provincial coquettes. Thrown amongst this bed of beauties, I thought myself transported to a seraglio, and, looking sometimes at the brown and sometimes at the fair, I thought of circulating the handkerchief pretty freely, when, on the morning of the fourth day, Madame Duflos, who had no doubt seen something not quite to her satisfaction, sent for me to her room.

"M. Eugene," she said, "I am much displeased with you; you have been here but a very short time, and already begin to form criminal designs upon my young people. I tell you that will not do for me at all, at all, at all."

Overwhelmed by this merited reproach, and unable to imagine how she had guessed my intentions, I could only stammer out a few unconnected words.

"You would have considerable difficulty in justifying yourself," she added, "but I know very well that at your age we cannot repress our inclinations: but these girls must not be thought of in any way; in the first place, they are too young; then, again, they have no

fortune ; a young man should have some person who can assist him, some person of sense and reason,"

During this moral lesson, Madame Duflos, carelessly extended on an easy couch, rolled about her eyes in a way that would infallibly have led to an overpowering burst of laughter from me, had not her head-woman entered very opportunely to tell her that she was wanted in the work-room.

Thus terminated this interview, which proved to me the necessity of being on my guard. Without renouncing my intentions, I only appeared to look on the young women with indifference, and was skilful enough to set her penetration at default ; she watched me incessantly, spied my gestures, my words, my looks ; but she was only astonished at one thing,—the rapidity of my progress. I had only passed one month's apprenticeship and could already sell a shawl, a fancy gown, a cap, or a bonnet, as well as the most experienced hand. Madame was delighted, and had even the kindness to say, that, if I continued as attentive to her lessons, she did not despair of making me the cock of the mode, (*le coq de la nouveauté*.)

" But," she added, " mind, no familiarity with the pullets ; you understand me, M. Eugene ; you understand me. And I have also another thing to recommend to you, that is, not to neglect your personal appearance, nothing is so genteel as a well-dressed man. Besides, I will undertake to provide your dress for the present ; let me do so, and you will see if I will not make a little Love of you."

I thanked Madame Duflos, but as I feared that with her extraordinary taste she might make of me some such a Cupid as she was herself a Venus, I told her that I wished to spare her the care of a metamorphosis which appeared to me impossible ; but, that if she would confine herself to her kind advice, I should receive it with gratitude, and seek to profit by it.

Some time afterwards, (four days before Saint Louis,) Madame Duflos told me, that intending as usual to go

to the fair of Versailles with some goods, she had decided that I should attend her. We started the next day, and forty-eight hours afterwards were established at the Champ-de-Foire. A servant who had attended us slept in the shop; as for me, I lodged with madame, at the auberge; we had ordered two rooms, but in consequence of the influx of strangers, we could only have one: resignation was compulsory. In the evening, madame had a large screen brought, with which she divided the room into two, so that we each had our own apartment. Before we went to bed, she preached to me for an hour. Afterwards, we went up stairs; madame entered her division, I wished her good evening, and in two minutes was in bed. Soon sighs began to escape her, doubtless caused by the fatigue which she had experienced during the day; she sighed again, but the candle was out, and I went to sleep. Suddenly, I was interrupted in my first nap, I thought some one pronounced my name; I listened.

"Eugene."

It was the voice of Madame Duflos. I made no reply.

"Eugene," she called again, "have you closed the door properly?"

"Yes, madame."

"I think you mistake; look I beg of you, and see if the bolt is properly secured; we cannot be too careful in these auberges."

I did as desired, and returned to my bed. Scarcely was I laid once more on my left side than madame began to complain.

"What a miserable bed! I am eaten up by the bugs, it is impossible to close an eye! And you, Eugene, have you any of these insupportable insects?"

I turned a deaf ear to the question.

"Eugene, answer me; have you any of these bugs, as I have?"

"On my word, madame, I have not yet found any."

"You are very fortunate then, and I congratulate you; as for me, I am devoured by them, I have bites of such

a size ! If it goes on in this way, I shall pass a sleepless night."

I kept silence, but was compelled to break it when Madame Duflos, exasperated by her sufferings, and not knowing how, between the biting and itching, to relieve herself, began to cry out with all her strength.

"Eugene ! Eugene ! do get up, I beseech you, and be so good as ask the innkeeper for a light, that we may drive away these cursed animals. Make haste I entreat you, my friend, for I am in hell."

I went down, and came up again with a lighted candle, which I put on the table near the lady's bed. As I was but lightly clad, that is to say, with my flags flying in the wind, I retired as quickly as possible, as well out of respect to the modesty of Madame Duflos, as to escape the seductions of an elegant negligé, in which there appeared to me to be some design. But scarcely had I got round the screen, when Madame Duflos gave a piteous shriek.

"Ah ! what a size, what a monster, I can never have the courage to kill it : how it runs, it will get away. Eugene ! Eugene ! come here, I supplicate you."

I could not retreat, but, like a second Theseus, I risked all, and approached the bed.

"Where, where," said I, "is this Minotaur, let me exterminate him ?"

"I conjure you, Eugene, not to jest in that way—there, there, see how it runs ; did you see it on the pillow ? how it goes down the bed—what swiftness ! it seems to know the fate you have in store for it."

In vain did I use all diligence ; I could neither catch nor even see the dangerous animal. I looked and felt every where to discover its hiding place. I made every possible exertion to find it, but in vain. Sleep overpowered us in our endeavours ; and if, on waking, by a return to the past, I was led to reflect that Madame Duflos had been more fortunate than Potiphar's wife, I had the pain of thinking that I had not had all the virtue of Joseph.

From this time I had the job of watching every night that madame was not tormented by bugs. My service by day was rendered much easier. Considerations, anticipations, little presents—nothing was spared ; I was, like the conscript of Charlet, nourished, shod, clothed, and put to bed at the expense of the princess. Unfortunately, the princess was somewhat jealous, and her rule a little despotic. Madame Duflos asked nothing more but that, in more senses than one, I should amuse myself like a hump-backed man ; but she went into most tremendous fits of rage if I even glanced at another woman. At last, worn out by this tyranny, I declared one evening that I would free myself from it.

“ Ah ! you will leave me then,” said she, “ we will see about that.”

Then arming herself with a knife, she darted at me to plunge it in my heart. I seized her arm, and her rage being appeased, I agreed to remain, on condition that she would be more reasonable. She promised ; but, from the next day, curtains of green taffety were placed over the windows of the room in which I was placed, as madame had thought it fit to intrust me exclusively with keeping her books. This proceeding was the more vexatious, as I had then no prospect of any control over the work-room.

Madame Duflos was most ingenious in isolating me from the rest of the world ; every day there was a new precaution for my security. At last my slavery was so rigorous, that every person saw through the tenderness of which I was the object. The shop girls, who liked nothing better than teasing madame, came to speak to me every instant, sometimes with one excuse, sometimes another ; poor Madame Duflos was tormented to death by it ! how pitiable ! Every hour in the day she poured forth her reproaches on me, and never gave one instant's intermission. I could not for any length of time remain easy under such a despotism. To avoid a burst, which, in my situation, might have involved

me (I had then just escaped from the Bagne) I secretly took a place by the diligence, and absconded.

How little did I then think, that, after a lapse of twenty years, I should meet again in the police office, my little Humpina of the Rue Saint Martin : the proverb would have it so : two mountains never meet.

CHAPTER XLII.

The jolly butcher—A still tongue shows a wise head—The harmlessness of light wines—A murder—The magistrates of Corbeil—The removal of the body—The accusing address—'Tis either he, or his brother—The criminating wound—I hit upon the right man—The mark of Cain—The morning's alarm—Arrest of a suspected pair—One culprit taken—A second sought after—he is accused of being a liberal—The goguettes, or the bards of the quai du Nord—A pretext—Seditious songs—I become an assistant in the kitchen—Genuine wine—The man of principle—A removal to the prefecture—Confession—Resurrection of a dealer in poultry, &c.—A scene of somnambulism—The guilty parties confronted—*Habemus confitentes reos*—A friendly embrace—A supper under lock and key—Departure from Paris.

FOR upwards of four months a great number of murders and highway robberies had been committed on all the roads conducting to the capital, without its having been possible to discover the perpetrators of these crimes. In vain had the police kept a strict watch upon the actions of all suspected persons—their utmost diligence was fruitless ; when a fresh attempt, attended with circumstances of the most horrible nature, supplied them with hints from which they could at length anticipate bringing the culprits to justice. A man named Fontaine, a butcher, living at la Courtille, was going to a fair in the district of Corbeil, carrying with him his leather bag, in which was safely deposited the sum of 1,500 francs ; he had passed the Cour de France, and was walking on in the direction of Essonne, when, at a trifling distance from an auberge where he had

had stopped to take some refreshment, he came up with two very well-dressed men. As evening was approaching, Fontaine was not sorry to obtain fellow travellers; he therefore addressed the two strangers, who were not slow in returning his salutation, and a conversation soon arose between them. "Good evening, gentlemen," said he to them.—"The same to you," replied they. "We shall soon have night overtake us," resumed the butcher. "We shall indeed, sir," answered one of the two pedestrians, "and at this season of the year we must not reckon upon much assistance from the twilight."

"I should care very little about it," added Fontaine, "but, unfortunately, I have still a considerable distance to walk to-night."

"And where may you be proceeding to, if it be not too impertinent a question?"

"Where am I going? Why, to Milly, to purchase sheep."

"In that case, if agreeable to you, we may as well join company; my friend and self are proceeding to Corbeil on business, so that chance has been most favourable to us."

"Agreed!" exclaimed the butcher, "things could not have fallen out better; nor shall I be slow in profiting by it; for, in my humble opinion, when one has money about one, travelling in good company is far more pleasant than being quite alone."

"You have money about you, then?"

"You are right there, my friend, and a pretty considerable sum too."

"Well, we likewise have large sums; but we were informed that we ran no risk, as this part of the country was considered perfectly safe."

"Indeed! I am glad to hear it; but, were it otherwise, I have something here (showing a huge stick) that would make a tolerable resistance; besides, I think, the most daring thieves would hardly have the

courage to attack three such formidable antagonists as we should make."

"No, no; they would not dare to meddle with us."

Conversing thus, the trio reached the door of a small house, which the branch of juniper, decorating the entrance, designated as a cabaret. Fontaine proposed to his companions to take a bottle together. They entered; procured some Beaugency at eight sols the flask, and seated themselves to enjoy it. The cheapness of the wine—its harmless nature—their meeting with it at a time when weariness had begun to steal over at least one of the party—were so many reasons for lengthening their stay.—At last they rose to depart; and a general emulation arose as to who should defray the reckoning. Nearly an hour, during which more than one fresh bottle was discussed, passed in this amicable dispute; which, being at last yielded in favour of Fontaine, completed the elevation of his spirits, and raised him to the highest pitch of gaiety. Under similar circumstances, what man could have harboured suspicion?

Poor Fontaine, delighted at having met with such agreeable companions, thought he could not do better than take them as guides for the remaining part of his journey; and in full confidence of their integrity, abandoned himself to their guidance along the by-road they were then travelling. He walked on, therefore, with one of his newly found friends, whilst the second followed close behind. The night was very dark, scarcely allowing the travellers to distinguish one step before the other; but guilt, with its lynx-like eye, can penetrate the thickest gloom; and while Fontaine was unsuspectingly following the path recommended by his companion, the one who remained behind him struck him over the head a violent blow with his cudgel, which made him reel: surprised, but not intimidated, he was about to turn round to defend himself, when a second blow, more fatal than the first, brought him to

the ground : immediately the other robber, armed with a short dagger, threw himself upon him, and ceased not to deal out murderous wounds, till he believed his victim had ceased to exist.

Fontaine had yielded after a long and desperate struggle, and lay as apparently lifeless as his assassins would have had him. They quickly stripped him of the contents of his money-bag, with which they made off, leaving him weltering in his blood. Happily, it was not long before a passenger, attracted by his groans, came to his succour, and discovered the wretched man, whom the freshness of the night air had recalled to his senses. After having rendered him what assistance was in his power, the stranger hastened to the nearest hamlet in search of further aid—information was immediately despatched to the magistrates of Corbeil—the attorney-general arrived without delay at the place of crime, and commenced the most diligent inquiries respecting the slightest circumstances attending it. Eight and twenty wounds, more or less deep, bore ample testimony how much the murderers had feared that their victim should escape them. Spite of the cruelty of their intention, Fontaine was yet able to utter a few words, although his extreme exhaustion from loss of blood rendered him unable to give all the particulars which were necessary for the ends of justice. He was removed to the hospital, and at the end of two days, so favourable a change took place, that he was pronounced out of danger.

The most minute exactitude had been observed in removing the body. Nothing had been neglected which might lead to the discovery of the assassins. Accurate impressions were taken of the footmarks ; buttons, fragments of paper dyed in blood were carefully collected : on one of these pieces, which appeared to have been hastily torn off to wipe the blade of a knife found at no great distance from it, was observed some written characters, but they were without any connecting sense, and, consequently, unable to afford any information

likely to throw a light on the affair. Nevertheless, the attorney-general attached a great importance to the explanation of these fragments ; and, upon more narrowly exploring the spot where Fontaine had been found lying, a second morsel was picked up, which presented every appearance of being part of a torn address : by dint of close examination, the following words were deciphered :—

A Monsieur Rao—

Marchand de vins, bar—

Roche—

Cli—

This piece of paper seemed to have once formed part of a printed address ; but of whose address ? It was at present wholly impossible to make out. However that might be, as no circumstance is too slight to deserve notice in the absence of more substantial proofs, notes were carefully made of every thing that might be hereafter available information. The magistrates assembled on this occasion received the thanks their extreme zeal and ability so fully merited. So soon as they had fulfilled this part of their mission, they returned with all haste to Paris, in order to concert further plans with the judicial and administrative authority. At their desire, I had immediate conference with them, and, furnished with a *procès verbal* prepared by them, I opened the campaign against the assassins. Their victim had sufficiently described them ; but how could I place implicit reliance on information proceeding from such a source ? Few men in imminent danger can preserve sufficient presence of mind to take accurate views of all that is passing ; and upon the present occasion I was the more inclined to doubt the testimony of Fontaine, from the extreme nicety with which he detailed the most trifling particulars ; he related, that during the long struggle he had with the assailants, one of them had fallen on his knees, uttering a cry of pain and that he heard him moaning and complaining to his accomplice of suffering extreme pain. Similar remarks

to this which he pretended to have made, appeared to me very extraordinary, considering the state in which he was found. I could not bring myself to believe that he himself felt quite assured of the correctness of his reminiscences. I determined, nevertheless, to turn them to the best account I could ; but still I required a more definite point to start from. The torn address was, in my estimation, an enigma, which must first be solved ; and, to effect this, I racked my brains day and night, and at last felt satisfied, that, excepting the name, (respecting which I had but few doubts,) the perfect address would run thus :—

*A Monsieur ———,
Marchand de vins,
Barrière Rochechouart.*

Chaussée de Clignancourt.

It was therefore evident that the assassins were in league with a wine-merchant of that neighbourhood ;—perhaps the wine-merchant himself was one of the perpetrators of the crime. I set my plans to work, so as to know the truth as quickly as possible ; and before the end of the day I was satisfied that I had been right in directing my suspicions towards an individual named Raoul. This man had become known to me under very unfavourable auspices ; he passed for one of the most daring traffickers in contraband goods, and the cabaret kept by him had long been marked out as the rendezvous where a crowd of suspicious persons nightly celebrated their riotous orgies. Raoul had moreover married the sister of a liberated galley-slave ; and I was informed that he was linked in with persons of both sexes, of characters as desperate as their fortunes. In a word, his reputation was that of a loose and profligate man ; and whenever a crime was denounced, if he had not positively participated in it, all thought themselves warranted in saying to him, “ If it were not done by yourself, at least it was the work of your brother, or some of your relations.”

Raoul, however, contrived to anticipate every scheme

laid for entrapping him, either through his own sagacity, or the hints of his associates. I resolved, as a first step, to keep a careful watch over all the approaches to the cabaret ; and I charged my agents to observe, with a scrutinizing eye, the different persons who frequented it, in order to ascertain whether, amongst the number, there might not be found one who was wounded in the knee. While my spies were at the post I had assigned to them, my own observations soon informed me that Raoul was in the constant habit of receiving at his house one or two persons of infamous character, with whom he seemed upon terms of the closest intimacy. The neighbours affirmed that they were frequently seen going out together, that they made long absences, and that it was universally believed that the greater part of honest Raoul's profits were those drawn from his dealings in contraband goods. A wine-merchant, who possessed the greatest facility of observing what was going on in Raoul's domicile, told me that he had often observed these worthy friends stealing from the house in the gloom of the evening, and returning at an early hour the following morning, apparently exhausted with fatigue, and splashed up to the neck. I further learned that he had set up a target in his garden, and was constantly practising firing with a pistol. Such were the particulars I gathered respecting this notable character from all who knew any thing of him. At the same time my agents brought me the intelligence of their having observed at the house of Raoul a man, whom, for many reasons, they surmised to be one of the assassins we were in search of. This person had first attracted their suspicions by a halt in his gait, proceeding not so much from habitual lameness, as from recent injury ; and upon further examination of his person and dress, both were found in close agreement with the description given by Fontaine of one of the robbers. My agents further informed me that the man in question was generally accompanied by his wife ; and that both appeared on the best possible terms with Raoul. My emissaries

had succeeded in tracing their abode, which was in the first floor of a house situated in the Rue Coquenard ; and here, in the apprehension of giving the slightest hint of their suspicions to the suspected party, their investigations had rested.

These particulars strengthened all my conjectures, and I was no sooner in possession of them, than I determined to go myself, and watch near the house which had been described to me. It was now night, and I was compelled to defer my purpose till the coming morn ; however, before the sun had risen, I was on the look-out in the Rue Coquenard. I remained there without perceiving any thing worthy of notice till four o'clock in the afternoon, and was beginning to grow impatient of the little success our plans seemed likely to realize, when my agents pointed out to me an individual, whose features and name suddenly occurred to my memory. " See ! there he is," cried they ; and scarcely had my eyes glanced over him, than I recognised a person named Court, whom, from previous circumstances fresh in my recollection, I instantly set down as one of the assassins I was in search of. His principles, which were of the most abandoned nature, had drawn down upon him, on many important occasions, severe consequences. He had just been punished by a six months' imprisonment for some fraudulent act, and I well remembered having arrested him once before for a highway robbery. In a word, he was one of those degraded beings who, like Cain, bore on his forehead the stamp of shame and death.

Without being much of a prophet, one might boldly have predicted that this man was destined to a scaffold. One of those presentiments, which have never deceived me, told me that he had at length reached the term of that perilous career to which a blind fatality had conducted him. However, not wishing to hazard success by precipitancy, I inquired, with all possible caution, what were his means of procuring a subsistence. No one could satisfy me ; and it appeared a notorious

truth, that he was never known either to possess a shilling, or to have any ostensible method of earning one. The neighbours, when questioned, assured me that he led a most dissolute life, and, in fact, was considered as a person of extremely bad connexions and pursuits; his very look would have condemned him in a court of justice; and for my ownself, who had such powerful reasons for concluding both himself and his confederate Raoul to be finished rogues and highwaymen, it may be readily supposed I lost no time in applying for warrants for their apprehension. The necessary papers were no sooner asked for than given; and the very next morning, almost before daylight appeared, I repaired to the house where Court lodged; having ascended the stairs till I reached the landing-place on the first floor, I knocked at his door.

"Who is there?" asked a voice from within.

"Who should it be but Raoul?" said I, imitating the voice of the latter; "come, come, friend, open the door."

"Well, don't be in a hurry then," answered he; and, listening, I could distinctly hear the hasty movements of some one preparing to unfasten the door, which was no sooner unclosed, than, believing he was speaking to his friend Raoul, "Well," exclaimed he, "what news? any thing fresh turned up?"

"Yes, yes," replied I, "I have a thousand things to say to you;" but by this, through the glimmer of morning twilight, he discovered his error, and cried out, in a voice expressive of the greatest alarm, "Bless me, if it is not Monsieur Jules!" (This was the name which I was generally called by common women and thieves.)

"M. Jules!" repeated the wife of Court, still more alarmed than her husband.

"Suppose it is M. Jules," said I, "why should that frighten you? The devil is never so black as he is painted."

"To be sure," observed the husband; "M. Jules is

a good fellow ; and although he *nobbed* me once, never mind, I owe him no ill-will for it."

"I know that, my *regular*," said I ; " besides, why should you be angry with me ? is it my fault if you *do a bit of moonlight* ?"

" *Moonlight* ! Ah !" replied Court, with the accent of a man who felt himself all at once relieved of the weight of a mountain ; " *moonlight*, oh, M. Jules, if it were so, you know very well I should make no secret of it with you ; however, you are welcome to look about you, and see what is to be seen."

Whilst he was every moment becoming more tranquil as to the nature of my visit, I proceeded to turn over every thing in the apartment, in which I found a pair of pistols ready loaded and primed ; some knives ; clothes, which appeared to have been recently washed ; with several other articles, all of which I seized.

There now only remained to put the finishing stroke to my expedition, by arresting both husband and wife ; for, to have allowed either of them to remain at large, would have ensured the destruction of my plan for entrapping Raoul, who would have learned from them sufficient to defeat my schemes. I therefore conducted them both to the station in the Place Cadët. Court, whom I had pinioned, relapsed all of a sudden into his original terror, and became gloomy and pensive. The precautions taken by me rendered him uneasy, and his wife appeared to participate in his terrible reflections. Their consternation was complete, when, upon our arrival at the guard-house, they heard me give orders that they should be kept apart and carefully watched. I directed that they should be plentifully supplied with food ; but they were neither hungry nor thirsty.

Whenever Court was questioned on the subject, a mournful shake of the head was the only answer returned ; and eighteen hours elapsed without his opening his lips. His eye was fixed and heavy, and his whole countenance rigid and immovable. This impassability convinced me but too well that he was guilty. Under

similar circumstances I have almost always observed the two extremes, a profound silence, or an extreme volubility.

Court and his wife being in a place of safety, my next business was to seize Raoul. I immediately repaired to his cabaret; he was not at home. The waiter left in charge of the house told me that he had slept at Paris, where he possessed a small country seat; but that being Sunday, he would be sure to return home quite early.

This absence of Raoul was a mischance I had not calculated upon, and I trembled, lest on his way home the whim might have seized him of calling upon his friend Court. In that case he would of course have learned his arrest; and the knowledge of that might put him too much on his guard to enable me to lay hold of him. I feared likewise that he might have had a view of our expedition from the Rue Coquenard; and my apprehensions were redoubled when the waiter told me that his master's country house was in the Fauxbourg Montmartre. He had never been at it, and could not point out the road to me, but he believed it was in the close vicinity of the Place Cadet. Every additional particular I derived from him redoubled my fears, and led me to attribute the unusual absence of Raoul from his business to his having got scent of my intentions towards him.

At nine o'clock he had not returned; and the waiter, whom I questioned as closely as I could do, without allowing him to see into my designs, appeared all wonder and uneasiness that his master should thus delay his return upon so busy a day as Sunday invariably was with them. Even the servant, who was busied in preparing the breakfast I had ordered for myself and my agents, expressed her surprise at her master, and still more her mistress, being so much less exact to their usual hour for appearing than she had ever known them. "If I only knew where to send to," said the poor woman, "I would certainly inquire whether any accident can have befallen them." Al-

though fully persuaded that her fears were without foundation, I felt as much at a loss as the whole household to guess the true reason of his non-appearance. Twelve o'clock struck, still no tidings had reached us, and I began really to believe that the train had blown up, when the waiter, who had for the last half hour been posted sentry before the door, came running towards me, crying out, "Here he is, here he comes!"

"Who wants me?" asked Raoul as he entered. But scarcely had his foot crossed the threshold, than, recognising me, he exclaimed, "Bless me, M. Jules! why, what brings you in our neighbourhood this morning?" He had evidently not the slightest suspicion that it was on his account I had come, and I endeavoured to lead him still further from guessing the true nature of my visit. "So, friend!" said I, "so you are a *liberal*, are you?"

"A *liberal*!"

"Yes, even so; and you are further accused—but this is no place for conversation. Can I speak to you alone?"

"Certainly; step up to the room on the first floor, and I will follow you in a minute."

I did so, after having by signs instructed my agents to keep a strict eye over Raoul, and to take him into custody if he discovered the least disposition to quit the house. However, the unhappy man had no intention of escape, for in a very few minutes he joined me, and, with a look and manner expressive of jovial content, desired I would let him into the mighty mystery of my proceedings.

"Well, then," said I, "now that we can converse without interruption, I will frankly explain the cause of my present visit. But tell me first, can you not partly guess it?"

"Not I, upon my honour."

"You have already experienced great inconveniences

on account of those *goguettes** which you have persisted in holding in your cabaret, spite of the formal prohibition issued by the police against them. Information has been given that every Sunday there are meetings held in your house, at which seditious toasts and songs libelling government are permitted. Not only is it known that you countenance the assembling of a mass of suspicious characters, but it is understood that this very day a more than usual number is expected to collect within these walls from twelve to four o'clock. You see there is no blinding the police as to your goings on. This is not all; you are further accused of having in your possession a vast quantity of disloyal and immoral songs, which are so carefully con-

* In the years 1815 and 1816, there were in Paris a great number of singing clubs, called *goguettes*. This species of political rat-trap was at first formed under the auspices of the police, who peopled it with their agents. There it was, that, whilst drinking with mechanics and persons composing the inferior class, these spies of government worked upon them in order to involve them in false conspiracies. I have witnessed several of these mock patriotic meetings, at which those who pretended to the greatest share of enthusiasm were the tools of the police, and were easily distinguished by the gross and vulgar hatred expressed in their songs against the royal family. These intemperate rhapsodies were the productions of the same authors as the hymns of Saint Louis and Saint Charles, and were paid for out of the *secret funds* of the Rue de Jerusalem. Since the time of the late Chevalier Piis, M. Esménard, and M. Chaget, it has been well understood that the bards of the Quai du Nord possess the privilege of contradictory inspirations. The police has its laureates, its minstrels, and its troubadours; it is, as may be seen, an institution of great gaiety and hilarity, but unfortunately not always in a state sufficiently harmonious to bear celebrating in verse. Three heads were by these machinations brought to the scaffold,—those of Carbonneau, Pleignier, and Tolleron; after which the *goguettes* were closed—there was no further occasion for them—sufficient blood had been shed.

cealed by you, that my orders were not to appear before you except in a disguise, that would have prevented your recognising my person, and to defer my operations till the gentlemen of the *goguette* should have opened their meeting. I am truly concerned to be charged with so very unpleasant a mission. Had I been apprized that you were the person alluded to, I should most certainly have declined the office; for with you, what would a disguise avail me?"

Raoul smiled, "I think, master Jules," said he, "I should have been much amused at seeing you attempt to deceive me that way."

"Still," continued I, "it is better for you that I should be employed on this business than a stranger; you know very well that I have no ill will against you. So take my advice, and give me up every song in your possession; and further, to dispel the present doubts against you, refuse admission to every person whose presence here might, in the most trifling degree, compromise your safety."

"Upon my word," said Raoul, "I had no notion before how deep a politician you were."

"Why, as to that, friend," cried I, "a little of every thing is a useful trade, and I for one, find that if I desire to get on in this world, I must be able to ride on any saddle."

"Well," replied Raoul, "you can't help it, Master Jules, but as true as my name is Clair Raoul, I swear to you that I am wrongly accused. People have surely gone mad! I, who think of nothing but just how to earn a bit of honest bread! What a world is this! Nothing but envy and spite against those who seem likely to meet with any thing like success!—however, M. Jules, if you doubt my word, you can easily judge for yourself—just make up your mind to stay here with your people; observe us well throughout the day, and form your own opinion of our principles and loyalty."

"Agreed," said I, "but hark ye, friend Raoul, no

gammon if you please ; you are just the chap to destroy all these objectionable songs, and nothing would be easier than for you to give a hint to your company, that would effectually silence the *goguette* singers from committing themselves in my hearing."

"Who do you take me for, sir?" exclaimed Raoul with quickness. "I am incapable of such conduct ; if I promise you to let every thing proceed as if you were not present, nothing could induce me to deviate from it ; you can either believe me or not, at your pleasure, but to convince you of my honour in the business, you shall remain by my side the whole of the day ; I pledge myself not to breathe one word respecting you to a living soul, not even to my wife when she comes home, so that you may be very sure ;—however, you will, I hope, see no objection to my attending to my customers as usual."

"Assuredly not ; let every thing go on as usual, and to lull all suspicion I don't care if I lend you a helping hand."

"Your offer is too agreeable to be refused," replied Raoul ; "so if you please, M. Jules, we will proceed to work at once."

"Come on then," said I, and we descended the stairs together. Raoul prepared his huge carving-knife, and, with my sleeves tucked up, and a napkin fastened before me, I aided him in carving the veal, which, with the accompaniment of sorrel sauce, was destined for the banquet of the Luculluses of the cabaret. From the veal we proceeded to the mutton ; we set out some dozens of chops in the most tempting manner, and trimmed up the leg, that delicate morsel so generally relished and longed for. I next assisted in preparing some turkeys for the spit, after which we cleared away the litter, and repaired to the wine cellar, where I made myself equally useful, by helping my companion to manufacture *genuine wine* at six sols the flask.

During this operation I was quite alone with Raoul, who passed me off to every one as his most intimate

friend. I stuck as close to him as his very shadow, and he himself appeared as unable to dispense with me as with his large carving knife. I must confess that several times I trembled lest he should suspect the motive of my watching him so closely ; had he done so, he would certainly have murdered me, and I must have perished beneath his violence, without any human creature being able to assist me ; happily he saw in me only a familiar of the political inquisition, and as to the seditious imputations urged against him, he was perfectly at his ease.

Up to four o'clock I continued my assistance as second in office, when the commissary of police, (now head of the second division,) whom I had informed of the affair, arrived. I was on the ground floor, when I perceived him at a distance, and hastening to him, I begged he would not make his appearance for a few minutes. I then returned to Raoul, and affecting to be exceedingly angry, "The devil take them!" cried I, "the police have just sent to me to say that our business lies at your house in Paris, and that we must remove thither instantly."

"Oh, if that be all," said Raoul, "let us go there at once."

"Yes," replied I, "and when we are there we shall be ordered back again here ; faith, they do not stand very nice as to the trouble they give us with the contradictory orders ! if I were in your place, since we are in your house, I would send to request the commissary of police to allow your premises to be searched ; it would be a convincing argument that you were wrongly accused."

Raoul applauded this advice as most excellent, did as I recommended, and having obtained the commissary's consent, the strictest search took place, without, however, its producing anything to criminate him.

"Well," cried he, (when the whole was concluded,) with that tone of exultation which might have sprung from a man of conscious integrity ; "Well, gentlemen, I

nope you are now satisfied. Upon my word, I do not think myself at all well used to be suspected and searched in this manner. Why you could not have done more had I committed murder !”

The assurance with which the latter part of the sentence was pronounced really startled me, and for a moment I repented of having ever suspected him, but the many reasons I had for concluding him guilty quickly effaced my regret. Still it was frightful to consider that a robber and murderer like himself, whose hands were yet reeking with the blood of his victim, could, without a shudder, utter words which thus recalled his guilt. Raoul was calm and almost triumphant in his manner ; and when we were seated in the hackney-coach which was to transport us to Paris, an indifferent spectator might have supposed he was proceeding to a festival ; he rubbed his hands, and said with all the glee imaginable, “ I am thinking how my wife will be astonished at seeing me return to her in such good company.” It happened to be his wife who opened the door ; at the sight of us her countenance underwent not the slightest alteration ; she presented us with seats, but as we had but little time to lose, the commissary and myself immediately set to work to perform our task of examining the house. Raoul did not appear desirous of quitting us for a moment, but guided us through our search with the utmost complaisance.

In order to give a colouring to the story I had first told him, we affected the greatest solicitude respecting his papers ; he gave me the key of his *escritoire*. I seized upon a bundle of papers, and the first upon which I cast my eyes was a direction, part of which had been torn off. Instantly the shape of the torn fragment, on which was written the address found on the place of murder, and affixed by the magistrates of Corbeil to their *procès verbal*, occurred to my recollection. The piece now before me had evidently formed part of it. The commissary to whom I communicated my opinion coincided with me in it. Raoul

had at first seen us take up the note and examine it, with perfect indifference : possibly, he might not himself recollect, just at that moment, its fatal signification ; but as he observed our scrutiny more and more directed to it, his memory evidently refreshed him with its full force : his countenance changed in an instant ; the muscles of his face contracted ; a ghastly paleness came over him ; and springing towards a drawer in which were his loaded pistols, he endeavoured to seize them ; when, by an equally rapid movement, my agents and myself threw ourselves upon him, and soon deprived him of all power of resistance.

It was nearly midnight when Raoul and his wife were conducted to the prefecture ;—Court arrived there a quarter of an hour afterwards. The two accomplices were separately confined. Up to this period there had been nothing but presumptive evidence against them ; I therefore undertook to obtain their own confession whilst they remained in their first stupor. It was on Court that I first employed my eloquence. I worked him, as it is called, in every possible way. I used every species of argument to convince him that it was to his own interest to make a full avowal.

“Take my advice,” said I to him, “declare the truth of the matter ; why should you persist in endeavouring to conceal what is known to every one ? you will find, by the very first question put to you at your examination, that your judges are much better informed than you think for—death has not sealed the lips of all the persons you have attacked. Many of those you believed your victims will produce overwhelming proofs against you ; you may be silent if you please, but your silence will not prevent your condemnation ; public execution is not all you expose yourself to ; think of the punishments and severity with which your obstinacy will be visited ; justly irritated against you, the magistrates will show you no mercy up to the hour of your execution ; you will be watched, tormented, worse even than by the tortures of a slow consuming fire : if you persist in

your obstinate refusal to make a full confession, your prison will be a perfect hell to you. On the contrary, by avowing your past iniquities, expressing sorrow and contrition for them, and meeting your fate with resignation, (since you cannot hope to escape from it,) you will at least have a chance of exciting the pity of mankind, and the humane consideration of those appointed to try you."

I had carefully foreborne mentioning to Court of what murder he was accused ; fully impressed with the idea of his having been accessory to more than one, I avoided specifying that of which he then stood charged. I hoped that, by using only vague words, and refraining from every precise detail, I might be enabled to draw him on to the confession of other crimes besides the one for which he was then in custody. Court reflected for a moment—

" Well, then," said he, " since you advise it, I will acknowledge that it was I who murdered the travelling poulterer.—Why, his soul must have stuck faster to his body than I guessed it could—poor devil ! and did he really come back to life after such a dressing as I gave him ? I'll tell you, M. Jules, how the thing happened, and I wish I may die if I tell a lie about it :—A number of Normans were returning home, after having sold their wares at Paris. I fancied they must be loaded with money, and in consequence lay in wait for them. I stopped the two first who came by, but found little or nothing upon them. I was at that time in the most extreme necessity : want drove me on to the deed, for my wife was destitute of every thing, and the thoughts of her wretched state wrung my heart. At last, whilst I was giving myself up to despair, I heard the noise of wheels : I hastened to meet it ; it was a poulterer's cart ; the poor wretch was half asleep when I called to him to deliver up his purse. He emptied his pockets. I felt in them myself, but his whole possessions were 80 francs !—80 francs ! what was that to me who was in debt to every one ? I owed two

quarters' rent, and my landlord was hourly threatening to turn us out of doors. To heighten my misery, I was dunned by other creditors equally merciless. What was I to do with this paltry supply of 80 francs? Rage took possession of me. I seized my pistols, and, without one moment's reflection, discharged them both at my gentleman's heart. A fortnight afterwards I learned that he still lived! you may imagine, therefore, that my present situation does not surprise me; for, since the moment I have been describing to you, I have never enjoyed one hour's peace, in the fear of his paying me off sooner or later."

"Your fears were well founded," said I, "but this unfortunate dealer in poultry is not your only victim; what do you expect from the butcher whom you pierced through and through with your knife, after having carried off his purse?"

"Oh, as to that," exclaimed the villain, "may God receive his soul! I will answer for it, that if he witnesses against me, it can only be at the last judgment."

"You are mistaken, the butcher did not die of his wounds, any more than the former victim you were speaking of."

"Ah! so much the better," cried Court.

"No, he lives; and I must warn you that he has pointed out both you and your accomplices, in a manner too distinct to admit of any mistake."

Court endeavoured to persist in affirming that he had no accomplices; but he became weary of his own falsehood, and at length admitted that Clair Raoul had participated in the crime for which he was accused. I urged him (but in vain) to name others as well: he maintained the same story, and I was compelled to content myself with what I had already drawn from him; however, in the fear of his retracting, I summoned the commissary, in whose presence Court repeated, and even enlarged upon, what he had previously told me,

To have brought Court to an acknowledgment of his crime, and to obtain from him a written declaration of it, was no doubt an important point gained ; but a more difficult battle remained to be fought ere Raoul could be persuaded to follow his example. To effect this, I stole softly to the room in which he was confined. He was sleeping ; and, stepping cautiously in the fear of awaking him, I placed myself beside him, and whispered gently in his ear, in the hope of leading him, as under the influence of a dream, to answer the questions thus put to him. Without raising the low tone in which I had first addressed him, I interrogated him as to the particulars of the murder. Some unintelligible words escaped him, but it was impossible to make any sense of them. This scene lasted for nearly a quarter of an hour, when, at my asking him " What became of the knife with which you murdered your victim ?" he gave a sudden start, uttered some inarticulate sounds, and, flinging himself from the bed on which he was lying, opened his wild and glaring eyes full upon me, as if he dreaded the apparition of some horrid vision.

From the terror and astonishment with which he continued to regard me, even after he had recognised my person, it might easily be perceived that he dreaded my having been the witness to his late severe internal struggle, and I could readily see in his eyes the eagerness with which he sought to divine how far his restless guilty conscience had betrayed him during his unquiet slumbers. A cold perspiration covered his face, he was deathly pale, and whilst he endeavoured to force a smile, his teeth chattered and ground together in spite of him ; he presented an exact representation of a damned spirit in all the tortures of an agonizing conscience—a second Orestes pursued by the furies. Ere the last vapours of his uneasy dreams had passed away, I wished to turn the circumstance to account ; it was not the first time I had called the night-mare to my aid.

"You appear," said I to Raoul, "to have had a frightful dream; you have been talking a great deal, and seemed to be in great pain: I could not bear to see you suffer so much, and woke you to dispel the anguish and remorse to which you seemed a prey. Do not feel displeased at this language—it is in vain to dissimulate further; the confessions of your friend, Court, have informed us of every thing—justice is in full possession of every circumstance relative to the crime whereof you are accused. Do not seek to palliate your participation in it,—the evidence of your accomplice cannot be invalidated by any thing you can say, if you seek to save yourself by a system of denial, the voice of your unhappy associate will confound you in the presence of your judges; and if that be not sufficient, the butcher whom you murdered near Milly will appear as your accuser."

At these words I steadily examined the countenance of Raoul; a slight discomposure was observable in his features, but it soon passed away, and recovering himself, he replied with firmness:—

"M. Jules, you are trying to entrap me; you only throw away your time; you are deep and cunning, but I know my own innocence. As to what you say of Court, you will not persuade me that he is guilty; still less do I believe that he can have implicated my name, when there exists not the slightest appearance of probability of his doing so."

I again declared to Raoul that it was useless for him to seek to conceal the truth from me—"Well, then," said I, "if nothing else will do, you shall be confronted with your friend; we shall then see whether you will venture to persist in denying the facts he has sworn to."

"Let him come," cried Raoul, "I do not ask for any thing better; I am confident that Court is incapable of a bad or dishonourable action.—Why should he accuse himself of a crime he has not committed, and implicate me in it for mere wantonness? unless indeed he has lost his senses, which is not very likely.—Hark ye, M.

Jules ; I am so certain of what I assert, that if he says he committed this murder, and that I had a share in it, I consent to pass for the greatest scoundrel that ever walked the earth.—I will acknowledge, as true, whatever he may say ; and, I further engage, either to clear my innocence through his means, or to ascend the same scaffold with him.—I do not dread the guillotine, whether its blow descend for this or any other offence ; if Court confirms what you have said, be it so—all is over—the veil is raised, and two heads will fall at once.”

I quitted him in these dispositions, and went to propose the interview to his comrade : this latter, however, refused, declaring that, after the confession he had made, he had not the courage to encounter Raoul.—“ Since I have regularly signed and attested my deposition,” said he, “ let it be read to him, it will suffice to convince him ; besides, he will recognise my writing.”

This repugnance, which I was far from expecting, vexed me so much the more, as I have frequently known the thoughts of a man arraigned of crime to change in an instant from one opinion to the opposite extreme. I exerted all my influence to overcome Court’s objections, and at length succeeded in deciding him to act as I wished. After a trifling delay, the two friends found themselves in each other’s presence : they embraced ; and the ingenuity of Court suggested to him a *ruse* by which to palliate his having involved his co-adjutor in his acknowledgment of guilt ; and this, without having originated in my advice, materially assisted my plans :—“ Friend Raoul,” cried Court, “ I am informed you have followed my example, and made a full confession of our unfortunate crime. It was the very best thing we could either of us do ; for, as M. Jules observes, there are too many convincing proofs against us, to make further denial of any avail.”

The person to whom these words were addressed stood for an instant as if petrified with astonishment ;

but, quickly gathering his spirits,—“Faith, M. Jules!” exclaimed he, “you have managed well—we are both completely drawn! Now, then, as I am a man of my word, I will keep that I gave you, by concealing nothing;” and immediately he began a recital which fully confirmed that of his associate. These new revelations having received the usual forms of law, I remained in conversation with the two assassins, who bore their part in it with inexhaustible mirth and hilarity, the general effect of confession with the greatest criminals. I supped with them, and although they ate heartily they drank very moderately. Their countenances had resumed their usual calmness, and no vestige was perceptible of the late catastrophe; they looked upon it as a settled thing, that by their confession they had undertaken to pay their debt to offended justice.

After supper I informed them that we should set out in the night for Corbeil. “In that case,” said Raoul, “it is not worth while going to bed;” and he begged of me to procure him a pack of cards. When the vehicle which was to convey us was ready, they were as deeply engaged with their game of piquet, as any two peaceful citizens of Paris could have been.

They ascended the carriage without appearing to suffer the least emotion at so doing, and we had scarcely reached the Barrière d’Italie, when they were happily asleep and snoring; nor had they aroused themselves, when, at eight o’clock in the morning, we entered Corbeil.



CHAPTER XLIII.

Arrival at Corbeil—Popular legends—A crowd—The gossips—Good company—Poulailler and Captain Picard—A disgust for grandeur—The dealer in turkeys—General Beaufort—Public opinion of myself—Extreme terror of a sous préfet—Assassins and their victim—Repentance—Another supper—Place the knives—Important discoveries &c. &c.

THE noise of our arrival was quickly spread abroad, and the inhabitants flocked to have a view of the assassins of the butcher, whose story had excited so much commiseration. I was equally an object of curiosity to them, and was pleased with the present opportunity of learning the opinion entertained of me at the distance of six leagues from Paris. I hastened to mingle in the crowd assembled before the prison gates, from whence I could easily overhear the most amusing observations: "There he is, that is he," exclaimed the spectators, raising themselves on tip toe every time the wicket opened to allow ingress or egress to any of my agents.

"Look look, do you see him?" said one of them, "that little hop o' my thumb there, scarcely five feet high."

"Stuff! a shrimp like that! I could put fifty such in my pocket."

"Shrimp as you call him, he is more than a match for you; he is a first-rate boxer, and has a sort of a back throw that would astonish you."

"All fudge, I dare say; do you suppose he is the only one that knows a good thing?"

"No no!" bawled out a second spectator, "this is he, this tall slender fellow with the red hair."

"What a lath!" cried out the next bystander, "why with one hand in my pocket I could double him in two."

"You could?"

"Yes, I could!"

"And do you fancy that he would allow you to lay your fingers upon him? No, no! you have mistaken your man;—he comes sometimes as if meaning to speak amicably to one, and just the moment you least expect it comes a *dig in the bread basket*, or, as he may happen to prefer, a *pelt of the conk*, which will make you see fifty candles at once."

"The gentleman who spoke last is perfectly right," said an old citizen, eyeing me through his spectacles; "this Vidocq is a most extraordinary character; I have been told that when he wishes to seize a man, he has a certain blow, which once aimed never fails to deprive the person against whom it is directed of all power of resistance."

"And I have been told," said a carman, joining in the conversation, "that he never goes without large *clouts* in the soles of his shoes, and whilst he is giving you a punch of the head, he breaks your shins with a kick a thousand times heavier than any horse."

"Mind where you are walking, you great clod-hopper," exclaimed a young girl, whose corns the clumsy carman had been most unceremoniously stamping on.

"Just a little treat for you, my pretty one," replied the rustic; "Never mind trifles like that, you are not quite killed. I dare say if Vidocq were to give you a gentle taste of the heel of his boot upon your favourite toe you might indeed call out."

"Indeed, I should like to see him dare to do so."

"Ah! he would spoil your dancing, I can promise you—but who is that coming from the prison? look."

At this instant I addressed the carman. "I hope," said I, "that the sparkling eyes of my pretty neighbour here would ensure her safety from Vidocq, wicked as he may be."

"Yes, yes!" rejoined the carman, "I believe he is vastly civil to the women. I have been told that he is a merry fellow enough with them, and bears an excellent reputation. Although many a pretty girl has lost hers through the honour of his good company." These

words were accompanied by a loud horse-laugh, in which the rest of the company joined.

"What is the matter there?" cried some who were not sufficiently nigh the scene of action to understand the cause of the burst of voices which assailed their ears.

"Hats off."

"Do you observe that man in the wig?"

"Are those the murderers?"

"There he is, there he is!"

"Who? who?"

"Do not crowd so dreadfully."

"Take your hands off, you blackguard."

"Knock him down! down with him!"

"How wrong of females to risk their lives by coming to a scene like this."

"Here, climb up on my shoulder."

"Down there, you are not made of glass."

"Are they all mad to make such a noise?"

"Oh, it is nobody after all, only a guardsman!"

"Are any of the spies amongst them?"

"Spies? Yes, four I have been told."

By the time these different exclamations were ended, the flux and reflux of the multitude had borne me away to the midst of a fresh group, where a dozen gossips were busily conversing of me in the following manner:—

FIRST GOSSIP. (This speaker appeared, by his silvery locks, of venerable age.) "Yes, sir, he was condemned to the galleys for a hundred and one years—commuted from sentence of death."

SECOND GOSSIP. "A hundred and one years! bless me, why that is more than an age!"

AN OLD WOMAN. "The lord be good unto me, what is that you favoured me by saying? A hundred and one years! indeed, as the other gentleman observed, that is rather more than a day!"

THIRD GOSSIP. "No, no; something more than a day indeed; upon my credit, a tolerably long lease of it."

FOURTH GOSSIP. "And so he had committed murder, had he?"

FIFTH GOSSIP. "Why did not you know that? Bless you, he is a villain loaded with every sort of crime, he has been guilty of every enormity by turns, each of which has merited the guillotine; but he is a deep rascal, and has managed to keep his head on his shoulders to the surprise of every one."

ANOTHER GOSSIP. (In what order his speech was made I do not now remember, I recollect only that he was dressed in black, and from the style of his dress and hair I concluded him to be one of the churchwardens of the parish).

THE FLEUR DE LIS. "No, better still! I am informed by my friend the commissary, that this Vidocq always accustoms himself to wear a ring round his leg—is it not strange?"

MYSELF. "Come, do not seek to *gammon* us with your stories of rings, do you suppose we could not perceive it, if it were worn as you say."

THE GOSSIP IN BLACK. (Gravely.) "No, sir, you could not see it; in the first place, you are not to imagine it an iron ring of four or five pounds weight. No, it is a golden ring, as light as possible, and nearly imperceptible. Ah! indeed, if like me he wore short knee breeches, you would soon discover it, but those trowsers hide every thing.—Trowsers indeed! an absurd fashion. We may thank the revolution for that introduction as well as for cropped heads, hair *à la Titus* as they term it, which no longer leave it possible to discover a gentleman from one who has tugged at the galleys. I only ask you, gentlemen, whether if this Vidocq were to introduce himself amongst you, you would feel particularly flattered by his company?"

"Pray," asked the old woman who had before spoken, "is it true that he was publicly branded?"

"Certainly, madam; that too with a red hot iron on both shoulders. I will answer for it that if he were stripped, you would read the mark in all its brightness. I ask you once more, my friends, what would you say were this fellow to presume to show himself here?"

A CHEVALIER OF SAINT LOUIS. "I can't say I should particularly desire the honour of his company; what think you, M. de la Potonière?"

M. DE LA POTONIERE. "Upon the word of a gentleman, my only wish would be to rid myself of it as soon as possible. A galley-slave, and, what is still worse, a spy of the police! If he only employed himself in arresting villains similar to those he has brought to our town to-day, he would be earning honourable bread; but do you know on what condition he was removed from the Bagne? To obtain his liberty he has engaged to deliver up to justice a hundred individuals a month; whether guilty or innocent matters little to him; the number must be made up, or he would speedily be re-conducted from whence he came. On the other hand, should he exceed his engagement, he receives a premium for each one above the required quantity. Is this the way these things are managed in England, Sir Wilson?"

SIR WILSON.* "No, the British government has not yet adopted a similar commutation of punishment. I do not know this M. Vidocq; but in my opinion, however great a villain he may be, he is still preferable to those who merely suspend the sword of justice over his head, that it may fall with redoubled violence directly he finds it impossible to fulfil his disgraceful bargain. O'Meara, who is no greater friend than myself to our ministry, will attest that it has not yet reached this point of degradation. You are silent, doctor; why don't you speak?"

DOCTOR O'MEARA. "They would only have had to select from amongst the heroes of Tyburn and Botany Bay fit agents to undertake to preserve London in safety; but when a thief is set to catch a thief, who can answer for it that they may not join trades? and then what becomes of your system?"

* Most probably M. Vidocq means Sir Robert Wilson.—
TRANS.

THE CHEVALIER ST. LOUIS. "A very just observation. It is, indeed, an inconceivable thing why the police have never employed any but men of blemished character. Surely a sufficient number of honest ones might be found!"

MYSELF. "Perhaps *you*, sir, would not object to fill the post now occupied by Vidocq!"

THE CHEVALIER. "I, sir! God preserve me from such an employment."

MYSELF. "Then, my good sir, why propose impossibilities?"

SIR WILSON. "And impossibilities they will remain, till the police of France, which is *now* nothing but a gloomy institution, a series of continual devices and plots, shall have ceased to encourage spies, and shall have adopted other means than those at present employed to preserve public order and general safety."

AN ENGLISH LADY (surrounded by a host of half-pay officers, who appeared most anxious to pay their court to her, and who, I believe, was Lady Owenson.*) "Ah, general, you know few people understand these things as well as you do."

ONE OF THE OFFICERS. "See! yonder is General Beaufort, with the Picard family!"

LADY OWENSON. "Good day to you, general. I beg to condole with you upon the affair of your snuff-box, of which I have just heard the history. We have an old proverb in our language which signifies, 'That it is wiser to keep ourselves awake over our cups, than to expose oneself to a long nap in the nearest ditch!'"

THE GENERAL (with bitterness.) "That proverb might have been taught with profit to the unfortunate butcher every person seems talking so much about."

LADY OWENSON. "And not have come amiss to you either, general; but, joking apart, why do you not apply to Vidocq to recover your snuff-box for you?"

* Possibly meant for Lady Morgan, formerly Miss Owenson.—TRANS.

THE GENERAL. "To Vidocq! a thief! a scamp! a beggarly scoundrel! If I only fancied I had ever breathed the same air with him, I should hang myself the moment I discovered it. Me apply to Vidocq!"

CAPTAIN PICARD. "And why not, if he could procure the restitution of your lost property?"

THE GENERAL (with a tone of assumed consequence.) "That is exactly like your advice. You!—but really, friend Picard, you have a monstrously odd way of beating about the bush."

CAPTAIN PICARD. "General, I am at a loss to comprehend your meaning."

THE GENERAL. "Why, I mean that you have such a roundabout way of going to work, 'tis like your telling a story. There is no getting you to proceed in a straight line. Now in that account you have begun at least fifty times of your father having arrested the famous Poulailier ——."

LADY OWENSON. "The famous Poulailier! Oh! M. Picard, tell us all about it; do, there is a dear entertaining man. The famous Poulailier! pray begin; I am all curiosity to hear your amusing account of it."

M. PICARD. "At your desire, madam, certainly; although 'tis an old story, and I fear you will find it somewhat too lengthy for a lady's patience."

LADY OWENSON. "Nay, M. Picard, I entreat the favour of your relating it."

M. PICARD. "Well then, madam, you must first understand that this Poulailier was the most adroit robber that had appeared since the time of Cartouche. I should never have finished were I to relate only the fourth part of what I have heard my mother repeat concerning him; for though my parent is nearly four-score years of age, she has a famous memory."

THE GENERAL. "Come, come, captain, don't lose the thread of your discourse already."

LADY OWENSON. "Now pray, general, do not interrupt us. Go on, M. Picard—I am all attention."

M. PICARD. "To make the story as brief as possible

I will just proceed to inform you that, at the time in which my story happened, the court was at Fontaine-bleau, celebrating, with more than usual splendour, a royal marriage which had just taken place. My father, who was a police officer, received one night an express, announcing to him that one night, at the close of a ball, several individuals, dressed as noblemen, had disappeared, carrying with them the greater part of the diamond ornaments belonging to the ladies who had figured in the quadrilles. These thefts amounted to a very considerable sum; they had been effected with so much audacity, subtilty, and precision, that it was unanimously decided none but the bold and daring Poulailleur could have been the author of them. He had been seen at the head of six men, superbly equipped, taking the road to Paris. These were presumed to have been the thieves, and that they would pass on to Essonne. My father lost no time in repairing thither, and there he learnt that the whole cavalcade had alighted at the sign of the Grand Cerf, that deserted house now known by the name of the Farm. When my father reached the auberge I have been speaking of, they had retired to bed, leaving their fine horses carefully locked in the stable. My father determined, as a first step, to seize the horses, which he found ready saddled and bridled. They were shod the reverse way, so as to lead any person pursuing them into the idea of their having gone by a directly opposite road to that they had in reality taken."

LADY OWENSON. "What a deep trick! These robbers appear to have been a match for even your respected father, M. Picard."

M. PICARD. "My father caused the girths to be cut, and then ascended to the chamber of Poulailleur; but this latter, warned by one of his spies, had already flown, and the rest of the band were dispersed about the country: nor could he at present spare the necessary time for their pursuit. My father hastened to the Cour de France, where he learnt that a smart gentle-

man, dressed in a coat covered with gold, and having fine waving plumes in his hat, had been seen to enter a little roadside public-house. Doubtlessly this was Poulailier, at least so thought my father; when, upon entering the cottage, he perceived the object of his search. 'In the king's name, I arrest you,' exclaimed my father. 'Ah, my good sir,' replied his prisoner, 'for mercy's sake do not arrest me; I am not the person you are in search of, but a poor devil going to Paris with a flock of turkeys. On my road I met a gentleman, who bought them of me, and exchanged his coat for mine. I did not lose by the bargain, without reckoning the fifteen bright Louis d'ors he paid me for my turkeys. Pray, sir, if you are looking for *him*, do not harm him, for he is a charming gentleman; he spoke so gently and scholar-like about his being tired of living with the great, and how he meant to have a taste of rural simplicity, I think he called it. If you should meet him on the road, you would fancy he had been a turkey-driver all his life; he dabs among them with his long pole. My conscience! the poor birds have never had so strict a master. Little fear, I think, of their being lost on the way for want of being looked after.' My father had no sooner received these particulars, than he galloped after the pretended turkey-merchant, whom he quickly overtook. Poulailier, finding himself discovered, endeavoured to fly; but my father was more than his equal in speed. The robber then fired off a brace of pistols; but my father, not in the least intimidated, leaped from his horse, seized Poulailier by the throat, threw him on the ground, and succeeded in fastening his hands behind him. I can assure you that it required no small strength, as well as courage, to effect all this, for Poulailier was a most powerful man; however, in the present instance he had met with his match."

GENERAL BEAUFORT. "Well, Captain Picard, have you finished? Your way of telling a story is just what I have heard called *spinning a long yarn*."

MYSELF, (addressing General Beaufort.) "General, I ask your pardon; but the more I look at you, the more I feel assured that I have had the honour of knowing you. Allow me to inquire whether you did not command the gendarmes at Mons?"

THE GENERAL. "Yes, friend, in 1793. We were with Dumouriez and the then duke of Orleans."

MYSELF. "There it was then, general, that I had the honour to serve under you."

THE GENERAL (extending his hand to me with enthusiasm.) "Ah, my noble comrade, come to my arms. You must positively eat your dinner with me. Gentlemen, I beg to present to you one of my old soldiers; he is tolerably strong built, is he not? Ah, I had many fine fellows under me; but never mind. I say, M. Picard, I think my friend here could have arrested even your gigantic M. Poulailleur."

Whilst the worthy general was pressing my hands in his, and reiterating his request that I should dine with him, a gendarme, who had been seeking me amongst the spectators, approached me, and, gently touching my shoulder, said, "M. Vidocq, the king's solicitor has been inquiring for you, and wishes to see you immediately." It was really ludicrous to see how every countenance changed at these words. "What! can it be Vidocq?" exclaimed my late audience, with lengthened faces. "Vidocq! Vidocq!" shouted out others, and immediately all was fighting, struggling, and confusion, to endeavour to force a passage for the eager looks of those who were not sufficiently near to gratify their eye-sight with a view of the so much coveted monster, for such they certainly expected to find me. Some even climbed on the shoulders of their neighbours, to satisfy themselves as to whether I really was a human creature or not; of this I had convincing proofs by the following flying remarks which reached my ears:—

"Bless me! light complexion! I fancied him quite dark. I heard he was ill looking. I see nothing so

very ugly about him. What a strange manner of walking he has !”

These and similar observations were made by the crowd, whose sole interest now seemed centered in noting down every particular relative to my personal appearance. So great was the concourse of gazers, that I had much difficulty in forcing my way along to the procureur. This magistrate wished me to conduct the accused persons before the interrogating judge. Court, whom I first led thither, appeared intimidated at finding himself in the presence of so many persons, I exhorted him to keep up his courage, and to confirm his confessions. This he did without any great difficulty, as far as related to the assassination of the butcher ; but when questioned on the subject of the poulterer he retracted all his previous declarations, and it was impossible to lead him to confess that he had had any other accomplices than Raoul. This latter when introduced into the chamber, unhesitatingly confirmed every fact mentioned in the *procès verbal*, which had been drawn up after his arrest. He related in full detail, and with the most imperturbable sang froid, all that had passed between the unfortunate Fontaine and his murderers, up to the moment of his striking the first blow at his victim.

“ The man,” said he, “ was only stunned by the two blows he received from a stick ; when I saw that they had not sufficed to bring him to the ground, I drew near, as if to support him, holding in my hand the knife which is lying upon that table ;” pronouncing these words, he sprang towards the desk, abruptly seized the instrument of his crime, made two steps backwards, and rolling his eyes, sparkling with fury, he assumed a menacing attitude. This movement, which was wholly unexpected, filled with terror all who were present ; the sous préfet was nearly fainting, and I myself underwent some alarm. Nevertheless, I felt the necessity of concealing from Raoul the effect he had produced, and

I even sought to attribute his violent gestures to a good motive. "Gentlemen!" cried I, smiling, "what is it you fear? Raoul is incapable of acting like a coward, and abusing the confidence reposed in him; he merely took up the knife, the better to explain his share in the business." "Thanks, M. Jules!" cried he, delighted with my explanation, and quietly laying down the knife on the table, he added, "I only wished to show you how I made use of it."

To complete the preliminaries it only remained to confront the accused with Fontaine; the surgeon was applied to, to ascertain whether the sick man was sufficiently recovered to bear so trying a scene, and he having replied in the affirmative, Court and Raoul were taken to the hospital. Introduced into the apartment occupied by the butcher, their eyes eagerly sought their victim. Fontaine with his head and face nearly covered with bandages, and his whole person wrapped in linen cloths, was indeed scarcely to be recognised; but beside him were displayed the clothes and shirt worn by him on the night he was so cruelly assaulted. "Ah! poor Fontaine!" cried Court, falling on his knees at the foot of the bed, decorated by these bloody trophies; "forgive the miserable wretches who have reduced you to this condition; that you still survive is a striking interposition of Providence, who has been pleased to preserve you the better to punish us as our crimes deserve."

Whilst he was expressing himself thus, Raoul, who had likewise knelt down, preserved a deep silence, and appeared plunged in the deepest affliction.

"Stand up, both of you, and look the sick man in the face;" said the judge who accompanied them. They rose up—

"Take those murderers from my sight!" shrieked Fontaine, "their countenances and voice are but too familiar to me."

This recognition, and the manner of the culprits, was

more than sufficient to establish the fact of Court and Raoul having been the actors in this frightful tragedy ; but, I was firmly persuaded that they had other crimes besides this, with which to reproach themselves, and that, in order to commit them, they must have been more than two in number. This was a secret of the greatest importance. I determined to exert myself to the utmost to come at the truth ; and not to quit them till I induced them to unload their consciences by a full confession of their past misdeeds. On our return to the prison after this meeting, I caused supper to be served for the accused and myself. The porter inquired whether he should place knives on the table.

" Yes, yes !" cried I, " set knives to each gentleman, by all means."

My two guests eat their meals with as great an appearance of appetite, as though they had been the most honest men breathing. When they had drunk a few glasses of wine, I dexterously brought back the conversation to the subject of their crime.

" You are not naturally bad fellows," said I to them, " I'll engage that you have been led into all this by some scoundrel or other ; why not own it ? From the confession and repentance you displayed at the sight of Fontaine, it is easily seen that you would willingly recall, at the price of your own blood, the violence he received at your hands. And do you not consider that by concealing your accomplices you are responsible for all the crimes they may commit. Many persons who have come forward to depose against you, have declared that you were at least four in number in all your expeditions."

" They were mistaken then," exclaimed Raoul ; " I give you my word of honour, M. Jules, that they were ; we were never more than three, the other is an old officer of the customs, named Pons Gerard ; he lives just on the frontier, in a little village between Capelle and Hirson in the department of the Aisne ; but if

you think to catch him, I must warn you that he is not to be caught napping, he always sleeps with one eye open whilst the other is shut."

"No!" said Court, "it would be no easy job to nab him, and if you do not set your wits to work you will only get your labour for your pains."

"Oh, he is a queer hand indeed," cried Raoul; "you are no bungler yourself, M. Jules, but ten like you would not frighten him; at any rate you must be on your guard if he gets scent of your being in search of him; he is not far from Belgium, and will soon be off; if you surprise him he will make a desperate resistance, so try if you cannot manage to take him asleep."

"Yes, if you could find out that he ever does sleep," added Court.

I made strict inquiries as to the usual habits of Pons Gérard, and obtained a full description both of them and his person. As soon as I had learned every particular requisite for being secure of identifying my man, thinking to stamp the confession I had just elicited with all possible authenticity, I proposed to the two prisoners to write off immediately for a magistrate to receive their depositions. Raoul instantly took up his pen, and when his letter was completed, I carried the letter myself to the king's solicitor, it was conceived in the following terms:—

"SIR,—Being now in a frame of mind more suitable to our unhappy condition, and resolving to profit by the advice you bestowed upon us, we have come to the resolution of acknowledging to you every crime of which we are guilty, and to point out to you a sharer in them, whose name is at present unknown to you. We entreat of you, therefore, to have the kindness to visit us in our prison, in order to receive our depositions."

The magistrate lost no time in acceding to their request, and Court as well as Raoul repeated before him all that they had previously told me of Pons Gérard.

This latter now occupied all my thoughts, and as it would not do to allow him time to learn the destruction of his comrade's schemes, I instantly obtained an order to arrest him.

CHAPTER XLIV.

A journey to the frontiers—A robber—Mother Bardon—Assisted by a child—A deliberation—I address the object of my search—A feigned recognition—A pleasant fellow—The two make a pair—The false smuggler—False advice—A brigand astonished—We should not tempt the devil—I deliver the country from a scourge—Hercules with the skin of a bear—A great devourer of tobacco.

DISGUISED as a dealer in horses, I set out with my agents Clement and Goury, who passed for my ostlers; and such was the diligence used by us, that, spite of the severity of the season and the badness of the roads, (for it was in the midst of winter,) we arrived at La Capelle on the evening of the following day, which happened, fortunately for my purpose, to be the eve of a large fair. Having traversed the country more than once during my military career, I required but a very short time to arrange my plan of action, and to assume the dialect of the place. All the inhabitants to whom I spoke of Pons Gérard described him to me as a robber, who subsisted only by fraud and rapine; his very name was sufficient to excite universal terror, and the authorities of the place, although daily furnished with proofs of his enormities, durst take no steps to repress them. In a word, he was one of those terrible beings who compel obedience from all who summoned them; for my own part, little accustomed to draw back from a perilous enterprise, these particulars only stimulated me the more to enter upon the undertaking. My vanity was piqued to accomplish a task which appeared to vie in difficulty with the labours of Hercules, but did I know that success would attend my arduous attempt? As yet I was ignorant of many

essential points, but trusting for the best, I sat down to breakfast with my agents, and when we had sufficiently fortified our stomachs, we set out in search of the hardened accomplice of Court and Raoul. These latter had pointed out to me a lone auberge as the favourite haunt of Pons. This house was the rendezvous of a nest of smugglers, and the woman who kept it, considering Pons as one of her best customers, felt great interest in all that concerned him. So well had this auberge been described to me, that I required no further directions to find it; I therefore repaired thither with my two companions, and entering, seated myself without any ceremony, assuming the tone and manner of one well used to the ways of the house.

"Good day to you, Mother Bardou, how goes all with you?"

"The same to you, my good friends, and many of them. You are welcome to my poor place; thank God, we are all pretty comfortable, thanks for your inquiry. What would you please to have, gentlemen?"

"Dinner, dinner! my good soul; we are starving with hunger."

"You shall have it directly, sirs;—please to step into the next room, where you will find a good fire."

Whilst she was employed in laying the cloth, I drew her into the following conversation:—

"I begin to fancy, my good hostess, that you have forgotten my features."

"Wait a little till I have time to look well at you."

"Why what a memory you must have to forget how I used to come with Pons to your house last winter, many a time have we paid you a *moonshine* visit."

"Bless me! now I begin to recollect."

"To be sure you do, look again."

"Oh! now I remember you perfectly."

"Well, how is our jolly cove Gérard, how is he getting on? quite strong and hearty, eh?"

"I'faith is he, he was here only this morning, and

took a glass or two on his way to Lamare nouse, where he had employment."

Of this house, or of its situation, I was utterly ignorant, nevertheless as I had given myself out as a person well acquainted with the neighbourhood, I was careful not to betray myself by risking any inquiry. Still trusted that, without directly asking the question, I should be enabled to lead my voluble friend, by indirect means, to the point at which I wished to arrive. Accident favoured me, for scarcely had we swallowed a few mouthfuls of our dinner, than Mother Bardou entered the room, "You were talking of Gérard just now," said she, "his daughter has just called in."

"Indeed! which of the daughters?"

"The youngest."

I rose immediately, and running up to the child embraced her before she had time even to look at me; and rapidly naming each member of her family, made many and warm inquiries after their health. When she had replied to them, I cut short the parley by giving her a trifle of money, and recommending her to hasten home whither I would accompany her, as I was extremely anxious to present myself to her excellent mother; beckoning to my companions, we left the house, following the footsteps of our little guide, who, surprised at the novelty of the rencontre, was making with all speed for the dwelling of her mother. No sooner, however, had we got out of sight of the auberge, than I called to the girl, "Hark ye, my little one, do you know the place they call Lamare house?"

"It stands just down there," said she, pointing with her finger to the other side of Hirson.

"Well, then, I'll tell you what you shall do; just run on and let your mother know that you have met three particular friends of your father's, and that we shall return to sup with him. So that she may as well have it all ready for four of us.—That's right—make the best of your way; good evening, my pretty maid."

The daughter of Gérard pursued her way, and we

were not slow in following the road she had described to us, which brought us nearly facing the house we sought, but no persons were to be seen about, and upon questioning a countryman whom we met, he informed us that Pons was at work with a number of labourers at a short distance from thence; we proceeded onwards, and having gained an eminence, obtained a view of about thirty men employed in repairing the high road. Gérard, by virtue of his office of overseer, was in the midst of this group. We advanced within fifty steps of the workmen, when I made my agents observe an individual whose countenance and general appearance exactly corresponded with the description we had received of the ferocious Pons; although we entertained no doubt of his being the man, we durst not attempt to seize him, for should his companions undertake his rescue, we, of course, should come off but badly, and even his single arm, when impelled by the fear of being taken prisoner, might be more than a match for my small party. Our situation was embarrassing enough, yet had we displayed the least symptom of it, Gérard would either have made us pay dearly for our temerity in daring to attack him, or he would escape our grasp by a hasty retreat to the frontier. Never had I felt a greater need of prudence and self-possession. I consulted with my agents, two firm and intrepid men. "Act as you think proper," said they, "and rest assured of our seconding you in whatever steps you may take."

"Well then," cried I, "follow me, and do nothing till a fit opportunity arrives; perhaps we may turn out the more cunning party of the two, although the enemy may have the advantage of superior strength."

I walked directly up to the individual whom I supposed to be Gérard, my two companions keeping at a little distance. The nearer I approached the more assured did I feel that I had not mistaken my man; thus convinced, and without further hesitation, I hurried up to Pons, and embracing him with every demonstration of regard, exclaimed, "Pons, my good fellow, how are

you? how is your excellent wife, and all your family? quite well, I trust?"

Astonished at this unexpected salutation, Pons remained in silent examination of my face for some minutes; "Devil take me," said he at last, "if I know who or what you are; where the deuce did you spring from?"

"What!" said I, "not recollect me? am I then indeed so much altered?"

"Not I, I do not remember ever seeing you in all my life; can't you just tell me your name? Stay, now I look again, I feel certain that I have met that face of yours somewhere or other, although where I have seen you is more than I can tell."

"I am a friend of Raoul and Court," said I, whispering in his ear, "and am sent to you by them."

"Ah!" cried he, pressing my hands warmly in both of his, and turning to the workmen who were gazing in wonder at this unexpected change of his reception of me, "I must have lost my senses, I think, not to remember one of my best friends! Not to recognise my dear friend! the devil must have flown away with my memory. My dear fellow! let me embrace you;" and, suiting the action to the word, he gave me such an emphatic hug as well nigh stifled me.

During this scene my agents had insensibly advanced nearer to the spot where we stood. Pons perceiving them, inquired if they belonged to me? "They are two of my ostlers," said I.

"I thought so, but you must stand greatly in need of refreshment, and those gentlemen yonder would, I dare say, have no objection to a glass of something good;—what say you?"

"With all my heart. A bottle of your best wine will do us no harm."

"Well, then, let us go; but in this cursed place, which produces nothing but wolves, there is nothing to be had; however, if you don't mind walking over to Hirson, (which, to be sure, is a good league from hence,)

we shall get as good a bottle of wine as ever was uncorked."

"Come along then, let us go to Hirson."

Pons bade adieu to his comrades, and we set out together. As we walked along I could not help confessing that the immense strength of this man did not appear to have been at all exaggerated by Raoul or Court; he was but of middling height, probably not more than five feet four inches at the utmost, but square built, and exhibiting every indication of muscular power. His swarthy face, embrowned still more by a constant exposure to the sun and wind, was distinguished by deeply-marked features, expressive of energy and determination; he had enormous limbs, and a strong, sinewy throat, in strict accordance with the whole of his robust frame; in addition to this he wore immense whiskers, and a more than usual quantity of beard; his hands were short, thick, and covered with hair, even to the fingers' ends; his harsh and pitiless air seemed to belong to a countenance which might exhibit a mechanical relaxation of the risible muscles, but had never once smiled from an internal feeling of benevolence or good-will.

Whilst I was intently occupied in making these observations, I could perceive that Pons was regarding me with equal attention; at last stopping suddenly, as if to take a closer view, he exclaimed, "Why you really are a very fine fellow, and fill out your clothes as well as I have ever seen a man! I think you and I should make an excellent pair, for I am none of the slightest figures any more than yourself; not like that little hop-o'-my-thumb," added he, pointing to Clement, (who was the smallest man amongst my agents;) "why I could swallow a dozen such as he at my breakfast."

"Don't flatter yourself," said I; "you might not find it so easy a task as you may fancy."

"Very possibly," replied he; "these undersized chaps are frequently all nerve and muscle."

After these trifling remarks, Pons inquired after his friends. I told him that they were quite well ; but that not having seen him since *the affair of Avesnes*, I had left them very uneasy as to what had become of him. (The affair of Avesnes was a murder. When I alluded to it, his countenance exhibited not the slightest emotion.)

"Well, and what brings you to this part of the country?" asked he; "are you after a *bit of moon-shine*, eh?"

"You have just hit it, my friend," said I. "My business here is to endeavour to dispose of a string of broken-down horses, which are famously doctored up for taking-in the knowing ones. Our friends told me that you could lend me a helping hand."

"Ah, to be sure, you may depend on me," protested Pons.

With this sort of conversation we reached Hirson, where we halted at the house of a clock-maker who sold wine. We were soon placed round a table; our wine was brought, and, whilst we were drinking it, I led the conversation back to Court and Raoul. "Poor fellows," said I, "I fear that at this present moment they are very queerly situated."

"How so?" asked he.

"Why I did not wish to tell you all at once; but the fact is, they are in considerable trouble; they have been arrested, and I greatly fear that they are now in prison."

"On what account?"

"Of that I am ignorant; all I know is, that I was breakfasting with Court and Raoul, when the police broke in upon us, and, after closely interrogating us all three, they allowed me to go about my business. As for our two poor friends, they were detained in solitary confinement; nor would you have learned their misfortune, had not Raoul, in returning from his examination, managed to whisper a few words to me unobserved, begging of me to warn you to be on your guard, for

that they had been closely questioned as to their acquaintance with you. I cannot give you any further particulars."

"And who arrested you?" inquired Pons, who seemed thunderstruck at the intelligence.

"Vidocq."

"Oh! the scoundrel, the scamp! But who is this Vidocq, of whom we hear so much? I have never been able to meet him face to face; once only I perceived him following an individual into the house of Causette. I was told it was him, but I forget all about him; and I would cheerfully give half-a-dozen bottles of wine to any one who would procure me a good stare at him."

"Bless you, it is easy enough to meet with him," replied I; "he is always about in one place or another."

"Well, I would advise him to keep out of my reach," exclaimed Pons. "If he were here, I'll engage he would pass the worst quarter of an hour he ever experienced in his life."

"Oh! you are like all the rest of them, talking of what you would do; and yet if he were before you at this moment, you would sit perfectly still, and be the first to offer him a glass of wine." (At the time I was saying this I held out my glass, which he filled.)

"I! I offer him wine! May a thousand devils seize me first!"

"Yes, you, I say, would invite him to drink with you."

"I tell you I would die sooner."

"Then you may die as soon as you please, for *I* am Vidocq, and I arrest you!"

"How, how; what is this?"

"Yes, I arrest you!" and approaching my face to his, "I tell you, villain, I arrest you, you are *done*; and if you dare to stir one step, I will tweak off your rascally nose. Clement, handcuff this worthy gentleman."

The astonishment of Pons defies description. Every feature appeared distorted, his eyes starting from their

sockets, his cheeks quivering, his teeth chattered, and his hair stood on end ; by degrees these symptoms of a general convulsion, which had affected only the upper part of his frame, gave way to a fresh revulsion of nature. After his arms were fastened, he remained for nearly half an hour motionless, and as though petrified. His lips were apart, and his tongue glued to the palate of his mouth ; and it was only after repeated efforts that he succeeded in detaching it ; in vain his parched and swollen tongue sought a moisture, which the dried up lips were unable to afford, and the countenance of the ruffian exhibited alternately the pale, livid, cadaverous hues of a corpse ; at last, recovering from his lethargy, Pons articulated these words :—

“ What, are you Vidocq ? ah, had I but known it when you first spoke to me, I would have rid the earth of such a sneaking beggar.”

“ Well,” said I, “ I thank you all the same for your kind intentions ; meanwhile, as you have fallen into the trap, you owe me the six bottles of wine you promised to whoever would show you Vidocq, and you cannot deny my having done so. Another time I advise you not to tempt the devil.”

The gendarmes who were called in after the arrest of Pons, could scarcely credit their eyes ; during the search we had been directed to make throughout his house, the mayor of the place begged to see us, that he might express his grateful sense of the service we had rendered to the whole province.

“ You have,” said he, “ delivered us from a frightful scourge, from a wretch who was our torment and dread.”

All the inhabitants joined in expressing their joy at the capture of their late foe, as well as their astonishment at the ease with which it had been effected.

The search over, we removed to sleep at La Capelle. Pons was closely handcuffed to one of my agents, who had orders not to quit him night or day ; at our first halt, I caused him to be undressed, in order to ascertain whether or not he had any concealed arms about him.

When he was stripped I really doubted his belonging to the human race; the whole of his body was covered with a thick bushy glossy hair; he might, indeed, have been mistaken for the Hercules Farnèse, enveloped in the skin of a bear.

Pons appeared perfectly tranquil, nor did anything more than common arise till the following day, when I ascertained that, during the night, he had eaten more than a quarter of a pound of tobacco. I had, from previous observation, noticed, that men who are greatly accustomed to the use of either tobacco or snuff, make an immoderate use of it in times of great peril or emergency. I knew well that a pipe is never more quickly consumed than when in the hands of a condemned criminal, whether it be immediately after receiving his sentence; or on the eve of its being put into execution; but I had never yet seen a prisoner, situated as Pons was, introduce into his stomach a substance, which, taken in so large a quantity, might produce the most fatal effects. I very much feared that he would suffer from his excess, and even suspected he had committed it in the hope of its acting as poison. I, therefore, took from him what tobacco he had remaining, and gave orders that it should only be dealt out to him in small doses, and this on condition that he would engage only to chew it. Pons yielded with a tolerably good grace to this regulation; he ceased to devour his tobacco, although I never had any reason to suppose he had experienced the slightest inconvenience from what he had previously taken.

CHAPTER XLV.

A visit to Versailles—Great talking and little doing—Resignation—A criminal's agony—We make our own fate—The sleep of a murderer—New converts—They invite me to witness their execution—Reflections on a gold box—A Supreme Being—Nothing to be ashamed of—The fatal hour—We shall meet again—The Carline—The crucifixes—I embrace two death's heads—The spirit of vengeance—A last adieu—Eternity.

I RETURNED directly to Paris, and then proceeded with Pons to Versailles, where Court and Raoul were confined; immediately upon my arrival I went to see them.

"Well," said I to them, "our man is taken!"

"You have caught him!" exclaimed Court, "so much the better."

"But," inquired Raoul, "tell us how you managed to cage him, you must have had a fine business to tame so fierce a creature."

"He fierce!" said I, "on the contrary, he has been gentle as a lamb."

"What, did he make no defence? ha! ha! Raoul, do you hear that? he did not even defend himself!"

"The particulars you gave me of him," said I, "were not thrown away upon me."

Before quitting Versailles, I wished to show my sense of the kindness of the prisoners in thus aiding me in the capture of the ferocious Pons, and, accordingly, invited them to dine with me. My invitation was accepted with the most lively satisfaction, and during the remainder of the time we passed together, not the least gloom or sadness could be observed on their countenances; they appeared entirely resigned to their fate, and even their language seemed to have undergone some change, indicative of better feelings having resumed their empire over their minds.

"It must be confessed, my friend," said Court, "that we were following a rascally trade."

"Oh!" returned the other, "do not mention it; it makes no one rich in the end but the executioner."

"And that is not the worst part of it—to be in continual misery from constant alarm—never to know one moment's tranquillity—to tremble at the sight of a stranger."

"True, indeed! I used to fancy I saw spies or disguised gendarmes in all who approached me, and the least noise, nay, my own shadow, would sometimes frighten me out of my senses."

"And, for my part, if I perceived myself an object of notice to any person, I instantly supposed he was taking down the description of my person, and the blood would rush to my face with such impetuosity as to suffuse my eyeballs with a guilty blush."

"Little, indeed, are the pangs of remorse and the terrors of a guilty conscience guessed by those who are innocent of crime; for my own part, rather than endure them as I have done for years past, I would blow out my brains."

"I have two children, but if I thought they were likely to tread in the steps of their unhappy father, I would implore of their mother to strangle them."

"Ah, my friend! had we but employed half the care and reflection in doing well it has cost us to prosecute our wicked schemes, we might now be enjoying a very different lot, and anticipating far brighter prospects than those before us."

"Well, well! 'tis useless repining, I suppose it was our fate."

"Don't tell me that, there is no such thing as fate; we are the workers of our own destinies, depend upon it; and I do not seek such a weak excuse for my crimes; no, I acknowledge that to a love of bad company alone I may attribute my being the wretch I am: do you not remember how, after every fresh act of wickedness, I sought to drown the whispers of a reproachful conscience by drunken excess? I felt as though the weight of a mountain were upon me, and had I swallowed gallons it would have been insufficient to remove it."

“ And, for my part, I used to feel as though I had a hot iron gnawing my very vitals ; if I fell into a short sleep, a thousand devils seemed dancing around me ; sometimes I fancied myself discovered in clothes dyed in blood, burying the corpse of a victim ; or stopped whilst in the act of conveying it away on my shoulders : shuddering I have awoke, bathed in perspiration, wrung from me by the horrid visions of my tortured spirit ; drops of agony, which might have been gathered in spoonsful, stood upon my aching brow ; in vain have I sought by any change of position to taste a quiet sleep ; turning upon my pillow, which seemed filled with thorns, even the pressure of my nightcap has appeared to my throbbing brain like the sharp points of an iron band, which drove its rugged teeth through my temples.”

“ Ah ! I know well what all that is, I have felt as though a thousand needles were piercing every nerve.”

“ Possibly, what you have described, may be what is generally styled remorse.”

“ Remorse or not, it has been a fiery torment—a torment, M. Jules, which I am weary of ;—I can bear it no longer, and it is time to end my misery. Some persons might owe you a grudge for the part you have acted towards us, but for my part I consider that you have done us a service ; what say you, Raoul ?

“ Since our confession, I feel as though I were in paradise in comparison with my former sufferings. I know that we have a trying scene to go through, but our poor victims suffered as much at our hands, and it is but fair that we should serve as examples to others.”

At the moment of separating from them, Raoul and Court begged of me to do them the kindness to come and see them directly they had received their sentence ; this I promised, and I kept my word. Two days after they had been condemned to death, I went to them. When I entered their dungeon, they both uttered a cry of joy, and made its gloomy walls echo with the joyful welcome of their “ liberator,” as they termed me. They

assured me that my visit afforded them the greatest pleasure they were capable of receiving, and entreated me to bestow on them one friendly embrace, in token of my forgiveness of their past, and satisfaction at their present, conduct. I had not the heart to refuse them. They were fastened to a camp bed, with their hands and feet heavily fettered. I advanced towards them, and they pressed me in their arms with all the warmth and enthusiasm with which the sincerest friends would welcome each other after a long separation. A friend of mine, who was present at this interview, experienced considerable alarm at seeing me in a manner entirely at the mercy of two assassins.

"Fear nothing," said I.

"No, no," exclaimed Raoul, "fear nothing, there is little chance of our wishing to injure our good friend M. Jules."

"M. Jules!" cried Court, "no, indeed, he is our only friend, and what is more, he does not forsake us now!"

As I was leaving them, I perceived two small books lying beside them, one of which was half open, and was entitled "Christian Meditations."

"You have been reading, my friends," said I, "is religion a favourite study with you?"

"Oh no," said Raoul, "I know very little about it; these books were left us this morning by a clergyman who has been to visit us. I have just opened them, and certainly if people would follow the precepts they contain, the world would be better than it now is."

"Yes, so I think," said Court, "I am beginning to see that religion is not such a humbug as I once thought it; depend upon it we were not sent into the world to live and die like brutes."

I congratulated the new converts upon the happy change which had taken place in them.

"Who would have thought, two months back," resumed Court, "that I should suffer myself to be hoodled by a priest!"

"And you know," rejoined Raoul, "my contempt for them and their sermons, but when men stand in our present awful extremity, it becomes them to look well about them; not that death alarms me; I care as little for it, as I do for this cup of water. You will see whether I dread merely leaving this world, M. Jules."

"Ah yes!" said Court to me, "you must come."

"I will do so, I promise you."

"Honour."

"I pledge you my honour, I will be present."

The day appointed for the execution I repaired to Versailles, it was ten o'clock in the morning when I entered the prison, the two unhappy men were deeply engaged with their confessors. They no sooner perceived me, than precipitately rising, they approached me.

RAOUL, (taking my hand.) "You do not know what pleasure the sight of you affords me, my friend; we were just preparing to leave this world with a clear conscience."

MYSELF. "Pray do not let me interfere with so sacred and important a duty."

COURT. "You disturb us, M. Jules! surely you are jesting."

RAOUL. "Our time draws to a close, we have but a poor ten minutes before us. (Turning to the ministers.) These gentlemen will excuse us."

RAOUL'S CONFESSOR. "Proceed, my son, proceed!"

COURT. "There are but very few in the world like M. Jules; nevertheless he it was who caged us—but that is nothing."

RAOUL. "If he had not done so, some one else would."

COURT. "Yes, and some person, in all probability who would not have treated us half so well."

RAOUL. "Ah! M. Jules, I shall never forget all your kindness to me."

COURT. "No friend could have done more."

RAOUL. "And to come and witness the last concluding scene into the bargain."

MYSELF, (offering some snuff in the hope of changing the conversation.) "Come my friend, take a pinch, you will find it very good."

RAOUL, (taking a hearty pinch.) "Not so bad; (he sneezes several times;) this is *notice to quit*, is it not M. Jules?"

MYSELF. "I fear you may, indeed, look upon it as such."

At this moment Raoul opened the box, which he had taken into his own hands, looked at it attentively, and offering it to Court, inquired his opinion of it. "It is a fine thing of the sort, is it not, Court? tell me of what material it is composed?"

COURT, (turning away and shuddering.) "It is gold."

RAOUL. "You are right to avert your eyes from the sight of that fatal metal, which has caused the ruin of man since its first introduction; alas! we are melancholy instances of the pernicious effects it has produced."

COURT. "To say that for such trash we should draw down so much trouble and suffering upon ourselves; how much better had we devoted our time to honest labour. We had both of us excellent parents; what are we now but a disgrace to them and our families?"

RAOUL. "That is not my greatest grief at this awful moment. Think of the gentlemen whose *weasands* we have cut! the unfortunate beings! my heart bitterly reproaches me for their sufferings."

COURT, (embracing him.) "But you sincerely repent of your past offences, and are about to pay with your own life for those lives you have taken.—'He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' I think that was what the worthy father here was read to me as M. Jules entered."

COURT'S CONFESSOR. "Come, my children, time is hastening on."

RAOUL. "'Tis all in vain; the Supreme Being (if there really be one) can never pardon such guilty wretches as we are."

COURT'S CONFESSOR. "God's mercy is inexhaustible. Jesus Christ dying on the cross interceded with his father for the penitent thief."

COURT. "May he be pleased to intercede for us likewise."

ONE OF THE CONFESSORS. "Raise your soul to God, my children, prostrate yourselves in humble prayer before him."

The two sufferers looked at me as if to discover what they ought to do. They appeared to fear my ridiculing any devotional feelings as the result of cowardice or weakness.

MYSELF. "Let no false shame prevent your obeying the reverend father."

RAOUL, (to his comrade.) "My friend, let us recommend our souls to our Maker."

Both Raoul and Court kneeled down, and remained for about a quarter of an hour in that position. They seemed rather collected than absorbed. The clock struck half past eleven, they looked at each other, and both speaking together, exclaimed, "In half an hour it will be all over with us." As they pronounced these words they rose; I saw that they wished to speak with me, I therefore drew aside, and they approached me. "M. Jules," said Court, "we would beg a last favour in addition to those we already owe you."

"What is it? depend upon my readiness to perform whatever you may require."

"We have each of us a wife in Paris.—My kind wife! the thoughts of her breaks my heart—it overcomes me!"—tears filled his eyes, his voice became inarticulate, and he could not proceed.

"Come, Court," said Raoul, "what is the matter with you? Come, never play the baby; after all, you astonish me! can you be the brave fellow I took you for? Have not I a wife as well as you? Come, my boy, courage, courage!"

"'Tis over now," resumed Court, "what I had to say to M. Jules was respecting some commis-

sions we would fain intrust him with for our poor widows."

I pledged my word for the exact fulfilment of their desires; and when they had made known their wishes, I renewed the assurance of their being strictly performed.

RAOUL. "I was quite sure that you would not refuse us."

COURT. "Ah, M. Jules, how can we hope to repay your kindness?"

RAOUL. "If what our ghostly friend here asserts be true, we shall meet in another and a better world."

MYSELF. "I trust so; and sooner perhaps than we at present think for."

COURT. "Ah, 'tis a journey that must be taken sooner or later. We are upon the eve of our departure."

RAOUL. "M. Jules, is your watch correct?"

MYSELF. "I believe it is too fast." (I drew it from my pocket.)

RAOUL. "Let us see—twelve o'clock."

COURT. "The hour for our execution; heavens! how the time gallops on!"

RAOUL. "Look, the large hand is just about to overtake the small one! We shall never be weary of talking with you, M. Jules, but still we must part;—here, take these *prattlers*, we have no further need of them." (The *prattlers* were the books I have before described.)

COURT. "And these two crucifixes, take them also; they will at least serve to remind you of us."

A noise of carriages was heard, the two culprits turned pale.

RAOUL. "It is a wise plan to repent of our sins, but what if I determine to die *game*?—No; let me not turn bravado as many have done, but meet my fate with the courage of a man, and the resignation of a sinner."

COURT. "Well said, my friend, let us be firm, yet contrite."

The executioner arrived at the moment for ascending the fatal cart, and the sufferers bade me adieu.

"You have just embraced two death's heads," said Raoul, as he followed his friend.

The procession moved on towards the place of punishment. Raoul and Court were intently listening to their confessor, when, all at once, I saw them start ;—a voice, never to be forgotten, had struck upon their ear ; it was that of Fontaine, who, recovered from his wounds, had mingled with the spectators ; animated by the spirit of vengeance, he abandoned himself to the most ferocious expressions of joy. Raoul recognised him, and casting a look towards me, full of contempt and pity for the unmanly exultation displayed by the man to whom he was making all the atonement in his power, he seemed to express that the presence of Fontaine was unpleasant and painful to him. As the vindictive butcher had taken his station close by me, I lost not an instant in compelling him to withdraw, and by a slight movement of the head, both Raoul and his companion testified their grateful sense of this attention to their wishes.

Court was first executed ; even when he had ascended the scaffold his eye sought mine, as if to inquire whether I was satisfied with him. Raoul displayed equal firmness, he was in the very prime of life ; twice did his head rebound upon the fatal plank, and the blood spirted out with so much violence as to cover the spectators even at the distance of twenty paces !

Such was the end of these two men, whose villany was less the effect of natural depravity than the consequence of having associated with dissolute characters, who in the very bosom of society form a distinct race, possessing their own principles, virtues, and vices. Raoul was only thirty-eight years of age, tall, active, agile, and vigorous ; his eyebrows were high and arched, his eye small, lively, and of a sparkling black ; his forehead, without being depressed, retreated backwards a little, and his ears, which stood out from his head, appeared as though grafted upon two protuberances, like the generality of the Italians, whom he likewise re-

sembled in the olive tint of his complexion. Court possessed one of those countenances which defy the rules of physiognomy; he had a half squint with one eye, and the whole of his features could be said to boast of neither a good nor a bad expression; unless the sharp angles and projecting cheek bones might be construed into an indication of ferocity. Probably these symptoms of a bloodthirsty disposition had developed themselves through the constant murders and other atrocious acts in which he was constantly engaged. Court was forty-five years of age, and from his youth had been continually involved in guilty courses;—to have gone on so long with impunity must have required a more than ordinary supply of boldness and cunning.

The commissions intrusted to me by the two murderers were of a nature to prove that their hearts were yet accessible to good feeling. I discharged them with punctuality; as to the presents which they made me, I have preserved them and can still show the books and the two crucifixes.

Pons Gérard, whom it was impossible to convict of the murder, was sentenced to perpetual hard labour.



MEMOIRS OF VIDOCQ.

CHAPTER XLVI.

The three categories—Science advances—Crimes and punishments—Expiation without end—*Roberto credite experto*—The absurd penalty—The *ganaches* and the *voltigeurs*—The purse—The classic and romantic—The *Rococo*—Moral toxicology—Good and bad mushrooms—Monacography—The system of Linnæus—Monstrosities—Researches of a classification—A nomenclature—The *Saladomates* and the *Balantiotomistes*—Chemical analysis—The visit of the sage and the treatise *De Famosis*—Pockets à la Boulard—An astrological receipt—Argus and Briareus—Faith alone can save us—M. Prunaud or the unexpected discovery—I can get 50 per Cent.—The claim of the emigré—A domestic robbery—The watch—The lady carried off—M. Becoot and the duc de Modène—The English lady who flies away—Return to the categories—Let us begin with the *Cambrioleur*.

THIEVES form three great categories or classes, in which may be found many divisions and subdivisions.

To the first of these categories belong thieves by profession, who are reputed incorrigible, although the almost perpetual efficacy of the system which the North Americans adopt towards their prisoners, proves that there is no rogue so hardened but that he may be brought to repentance and an honest mode of life.

A life of constant crime is ordinarily the result of a first fault; impunity encourages and incites, and punishment does not correct nor divert it. Impunity may long favour the criminal, but sooner or later it has its termination. Happy would it be, thrice happy, if punishment (whatever be the nature of the crime) did

not leave behind an indelible brand of disgrace. But our European societies are so organized that inexperience has every means and temptation to become perverted. Does it succumb? Justice is at work. Justice! rather legislation. It strikes the blow, and whom does it strike? The poor, the ignorant, the unfortunate, to whom the bread of education has been denied; him in whom no moral principle has been inculcated;—him to whom the law has not been promulgated;—him who could have no rules of conduct but those lessons of a catechism so soon forgotten, because the child did not understand it, and the man only finds in it, beneath a mass of religious ceremonies, formulæ too little explained to be put in practice. Let us not be deceived: in spite of the diffusion of light, the education of the people is not yet completed, it is still to do. Science is abroad, but she walks alone; she advances for the privileged classes; she progresses for the rich. She illumines only the upper regions, the lower are still in darkness; the poor go on hap-hazard and blindly: woe to him who errs and mistakes the right road! At each step there are abysses, gulfs, barriers, obstacles—so much the worse! They have not the benefit of a beacon to guide them. Find out your road, ye poor and humble! if you do not find the proper one, your lives are the forfeiture.

Have you wandered from the line? would you retrace your steps? do you wish to do so in all sincerity and earnestness? Vain desire—your lives are forfeited—so wills the prejudiced. You are outcasts! you are incorrigible; *Parias*; hope is no longer yours. The society which condemns you, which excommunicates you, has uttered its anathema against you. The judge has sentenced you, and you shall have no more bread.

When the expiation is indefinite, why speak of temporary punishment? The tribunal inflicts a punishment, the duration of this chastisement is fixed; but when the sentence ceases to be in force, opinion still exists, and always strikes, right or wrong, right and left.

The sentence of the law decrees that six months of a man's life—six months of his liberty—shall be sacrificed, opinion annihilates all the rest. Oh! ye who pronounce sentence, tremble! the sword of Themis inflicts incurable wounds only: her blows, even when lightest, are like the eating canker which destroys all, like the Greek fire which consumes, but cannot be extinguished.

Our codes establish correctional punishments, and the worst of all criminals are not those who deserve punishment, but those who have undergone the law's chastisement. How is it that we go on in a mode inverse to our aim? It is because to ill use is not to correct, but contrariwise to pervert and corrupt more and more weak human nature; it is to compel it to become degraded, brutalized. I have seen criminals after they have been freed from every sort of imprisonment. I have seen thousands, but have never known one who, during his captivity, had formed determinations or found inducements to reform and lead a better life. Did they propose to amend? It was always from other and more powerful reasons; the remembrance of captivity only aroused a feeling of irritation, spite, rage; a vague resentment, deep and without repentance. They recalled to memory the rapacious porters, the ferocious jailers, the still more savage turnkeys: they remembered the iniquities, the tyrannies, the tyrants, or rather the tigers; and will they tell us that these men are also made in the image of God? It is downright blasphemy!

The freed prisoner, who proposes to maintain himself by honesty, must have more than common virtue; he must have heroism; and even then what security has he, if he possess nothing, that the whole world will not shrink from him? he is a pestiferous being, a leper which society avoids and shuns. Does it fear contagion? no—contagion is everywhere, at the *bagne* as well as under the gilded ceilings of the *Chaussée d'Antin*; it is pity that they dread, and they seize with eagerness a plausible excuse to avoid it.

Since the liberated prisoner is irrevocably pro-

scribed, if he has not the courage to perish, it is necessary that he take refuge somewhere ; an interdict is laid on his return to your society ; you repulse him, and whether can he betake himself ? Into his own, and his own is the enemy of yours. It is you then who increase the number of malefactors : for the principle of all society is mutually to assist each other. His peers will first extend to him the hand of succour, but if they nourish him to-day, it is on condition that to-morrow he will rob you. It is you who have reduced him to this extremity : do not complain, do not pity yourselves, but, if you retain any good feeling, pity him.

The business of a thief would not exist, not as a profession certainly, if the unhappy creatures against whom justice has directed her power once, were not disgraced, vilipended, ill-used ; society compels them to herd together ; she constrains their reunion, their manners, their will, and their power.

Let it not be thought that this thrusting out, this exclusion of the freed convict is the result of a delicacy of conventional feeling ; this system is but the consequence of hypocrisy. Is the liberated man rich ? All the world receives him with open arms ; there is no door that is not open to him ; he is received everywhere. *Roberto credite experto.* I can speak from positive knowledge. If he have a good table, and particularly a well-stocked cellar, he may calculate amongst his guests magistrates, bankers, money-brokers, counsellors, notaries : they will not blush to appear with him in public ; they will call him their friend ; he will be their very good associate and companion ; and the commissary, with hat in hand, will not deem it a dishonour to take him by the hand, quite the reverse.

The second class of robbers consists of a multitude of weak creatures, who, placed on a rapid declivity, between their passions and their wants, have not the power of resisting those dangerous seductions that beset them, and lure them on to ruin by bad example. It is, for the most part, amongst gamblers, that recruits are found to fill up

this distressing list, the members of which are on the high way that leads to the scaffold. A crown thrown on the green table is the overt act for him who does so ; circumstances follow, he is compelled to become a forger, thief, assassin, parricide ; those who authorize gambling are accomplices and provokers to crime : the blood of the infatuated being, and that which he sheds, is on your head.

The individuals who range themselves in the third class are the necessitous, whom misery alone has rendered guilty. Society ought to be indulgent towards them. The whole, with very few exceptions, only ask to be at peace with the laws ; but formerly it was indispensable that they should be at peace with their stomach. Population is certainly too much narrowed, or rather those who have the means are too egotistical as to their appetite.

Should not punishment be graduated by necessity, in proportion to the greater or inferior understanding of the delinquent ; in proportion to his situation ? The extent of his intellect, his abilities, cultivated or not, and a crowd of other powerful motives which always more or less destroy the free action of what comes afterwards ;—should they not be taken into consideration ? Punishments are proportioned to crimes : true, but the same crime is atrocious or excusable according as it is committed by a doctor of law, or a wild rustic of Basse-Bretagne.

In a state of civilization with which we are not all equally sharers, laws, that they may not be unjust in their application, should be made, like the soldier's dress, of three sizes, with a great latitude to the judge's discretion to decide according to the circumstances of the case.

Thieves by profession are all those who, voluntarily or not, have contracted a habit of appropriating to themselves the property of another : they have but one word, one thought—plunder. This class includes from the pickpocket to the highway robber ; from the usurer

to the dealer who deals in a palace, or in the provisions of an army.

We will not mention those who are not accused. The others form ten or twelve quite distinct species, without counting the varieties ; then come the passers from city to city. As to the object they propose to themselves, thieves are everywhere pretty generally alike : but it is not everywhere that they operate similarly, they progress with the age they live in. Cartouche now would only be a daring fellow, (*ganache renforcée*,) and Coignard out of the *bagne* would pass for an active light-horseman (*voltigeur*). The moving world has not, to my knowledge, an academy, but it yet possesses, like the literary world its classics and romances ; the scheme which formerly was “ deep and knowing ” is now but a poor device. The purse covered with bells, whence the *tatler* was to be *prigged* without one of the bells sounding,—this purse, which to our ancestors seemed a trial so ingenious and dexterous,—this purse is as Corneille, as Racine, as Voltaire—*Rococo* !!!

It is to the living that our moderns address themselves ; it is in nature that they make their first essays. At their very first *début* they do some master-stroke ; in their estimation the ancients are as if they had never been. There are no more models, no more copies, no more routes traced out, no one imitates. The contest is, who shall strike out for himself some novel mode of proceeding. However, he is in a circle in which the originals themselves must move. I have observed them, I have seen their point of departure, I know how they go, and whatever may be their evolutions or their genius, all the sinuosities of their progress are known to me beforehand. Through the thousand and one transformations which are produced daily by the necessity of escaping a searching surveillance, I have been able to distinguish the character proper to each species ; the physiognomy, language, habits, manners, dress, arrangement, and details ; I have studied all, remembered all : and if an individual pass before me, if he be

a robber by profession, I will point him out, I will even tell his line of business. Frequently from the inspection of a single article of clothing I would more quickly describe a thief from head to heel than our celebrated Cuvier, with two maxillaries and half-a-dozen vertebræ, can distinguish an antediluvian animal or a fossil man. There is in the garb of a rogue hieroglyphics which can be deciphered with more certainty than those of which M. de Figeac boasts of having given as the interpretation *ad aperturam libri*. There are equally in manners tokens which are by no means equivocal;—I ask pardon of Lavater, as well as of the renowned doctors Gall and Spurzheim, in fact of all physiognomists or phrenologists, past, present, and to come; for, in the monography that I am about to trace, I shall not heed the irregularities of countenance, nor frontal protuberances, nor occipital bumps: the indications I shall furnish will be more precise, and certainly more ascertained and positive, guarding carefully against that spirit in the system which only generates errors. A good toxicology is not based on hypotheses: see that of M. Orfila. We do not play with poisons; and when we desire to have a sure way of distinguishing between good and bad mushrooms, between the poisonous species and those which are not so, we must have proofs of an evidence so constant and palpable, that no person can mistake. That we may find a support in comparison, I quote the learned Doctor Rocques, whose excellent work on this subject is so justly estimated.

Since by this series of approximations, which the reader doubtless did not anticipate, I have reached the confines of natural history, I am not sorry of the coincidence to declare that it is only by my method that I have undertaken to class thieves. During my search a work fell into my hands with pictures, and for men as well as children illustrations have attractions. Whilst the commissary was actively engaged in discovering a pamphlet, (one, I think, by Paul Louis Courier,) I was amusing myself with the prints it contained. The

book which afforded me this innocent amusement, was a *Monacologie* or *Monacographie*, in which all the orders of monks and nuns were classed and described after the system of Linnæus. The idea was ingenious: I confess that it made me smile, and afterwards when thinking of drawing up a classification of thieves, I was almost tempted to make a profit of it; but when I reflected again, I was soon convinced that there would be a great deal too much to do to detect in a robber the stamina, petals, pistils, corolla, capsules: certainly with a little stretch of imagination we can see all that is written down so humorously; to make it appear, in spite of the phantasmagoria and conjurations of Cagliostro, is entirely another thing!—The capsules of a Minor friar and the pistil of a visiting nun may be imagined without much effort. But although robbers propagate their species, and increase and multiply one amongst the other according to the commandment, they increase and multiply no more nor less than plants and animals; as it is not that which essentially distinguishes them, I must renounce the Linnæan system, and resolve to state only my plain and simple remarks, without troubling myself by inquiring if it would be more advantageous to arrange them very learnedly, by adapting to the individuals who are the subject of it the more recent denominations of zoology.

Perhaps in considering the treatise of *Monstrosities* of M. Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, I might contrive to engraft my mode on his; but the analogy between monstrosities, with which both of us are occupied, have not appeared to me sufficiently striking to induce me to take the trouble of consulting him. Besides, who dares affirm that the inclination to rob is an anomaly?—and granting that it is urgent to repress it, it is still a question of inquiry, if it be not instinct. This is not all. Morality and physics do not always dovetail: when the latter is right, the former wrong, and *vice versâ*, would it not be an extravagance to wish to establish parallels?

I am not one of those who recede from innovation ; but in offering a nomenclature of thieves, I act conformably to ancient usage. I have preserved to them the denominations under which they are known to one another and to the police, since Paris has been sufficiently vast and populated for all species and varieties to be able to work simultaneously in its circle. I have been counselled to give, *ex professo*, a nomenclature of my own, with a terminology either Greek or Latin. I should then have trodden in the steps of Lavoisier and Fourcroy ; it would have been a path to celebrity ; but all that would have been only Hebrew for the common. What do I mean by Hebrew ? What ails my head ? I was not thinking of the Jews ; it is a mother-tongue this said Hebrew. On consideration, Hebrew would have done, and Greek also ; there are great Greeks amongst thieves ; so there are every where ! However, if it had done me no other service, to call the *Cambrioleurs*, for instance, *Saladomates* (house-breakers), the *Floueurs*, *Balantiotomistes* (cutpurses), I might have passed for a Hellenist. The late M. Gail would not have been a greater than I, by good fortune ! But even then, if I had, like the great chemist, analyzed, or caused to be analyzed, one of these gentlemen, would any person have been the wiser, because, aping Messrs. Gay-Lussac and Thenard, I should have said thus, a cambrioleur is composed, sinking evaporated atoms, of 53.360 of carbon, 19.685 of oxygen, 7.021 of hydrogen, 19.934 of azote, so much gelatine, albumen, osmazome, &c. ? Good heavens !—let us not go look for noon at two o'clock in the afternoon ; and, without caring for reputation, let us not use words that signify nothing ; let us call things by their right names. I have found the thieves already christened : I will not be their godfather. It is sufficient for me to be their historiographer.

It is not long since I was visited by a learned personage. A learned personage !—and why not ? Have not I entered on a literary career ? Since I commenced

the publication of my Memoirs, I have been visited by grammarians even, who have offered to teach me French, on condition that I would teach them *slang*. Perhaps they were philologists? Be that as it may; the learned gentleman came to my house. What did he want? We shall see.

He accosted me: "Are you M. Vidocq?"

"Yes, sir. What can I do for you?"

"I have made a valuable discovery, which must interest you very much."

"What may it be, sir?"

"A book, sir—the first, the most useful of books for you; and which, in duties so painful as those you have fulfilled, would have saved you infinite trouble."

"This is mustard after dinner."

"It comes somewhat late I own; but then it has not seen light these fifty years."

"And who has kept it so long under a bushel?"

"Who? do you ask!—the most terrible of our book-worms, the late M. Boulard. He used to carry old books about in his pockets, which were as long and as large as a hearse. He invented the pockets à la Boulard. Ten houses, which he had in Paris, were like the cemeteries of the dead, in which all that fell into his hands were pitilessly interred."

"What an amateur of burials!"

"Ah, sir, it were time he died! What treasures he had withdrawn from the world!—what unique copies did he keep in his hidden stores! This one also is unique; it is not without some difficulty that I have exhumed it; but at last I have succeeded, and here it is—a small tome: *De famosis Latronibus*. Merlin and Renouard bid for it like madmen; but I was at the sale; I was there, and headed them. It is now mine! I have it in quarto, as you see. It is thus entitled, *De famosis Latronibus investigandis, à Godefrido**. This Godefroid was a knowing person-

* Concerning the finding out of famous Robbers, by Godefroid.

age!—he knew them all, sir! Ah! it was a nice business for him to smell out a thief! It is in this learned treatise that he has noted down the fruits of his labours. Your successor, M. Lacour, would give the world to know his secret!—But it is yours; to you alone that I will pay due homage; and I have come expressly to Saint Mandé to offer it to you!”

“I accept it, sir, and thank you much. But would you be so kind as to inform me who this Godefroid was?”

“Who he was! Doctor *in utroque*, contemporary with the illustrious Pie de la Mirandole, and professor of judicial astrology in the most distinguished universities of Germany; judge whether or no he was capable of writing!”

“These are high-sounding titles, certainly, and very honourable, but was he ever at the gallies?”

“No: but that did not prevent him from knowing every robber from the time of Eve, who stole the apple, to the rogue, Ti-ta-pa-pruff, who cribbed the car-buncle of the prophet; there was not a thief whose prowess and deeds he had not at his fingers’ ends.”

“And he related them to his scholars, this pedagogue?”

“Related them, certainly: one must be very potent when possessing all the experience of past ages.”

“Your Godefroid appears to me to have been only an amateur; besides, if it were not abusing your complaisance, I would beg you to translate me some portions of the admirable treatise *De famosis*.”

“Willingly, my dear sir, very willingly. *Teneo lupum auribus*, I have the wolf by the ears. You will be satisfied, ravished, astonished.”

“We shall soon see.”

We seated ourselves on a bench at the entrance of my sitting-room. I silenced my dogs who were barking, the “learned pundit” began his version, and I paid the utmost attention.

At first it was necessary to listen to the *curriculum*

vitæ of all the mythological *prigs*, Mercury, Polyphemus, Cacus; then came the heroic period, filled with robbers and robberies; these carried off the treasures of Diana of Ephesus, the flocks of this person, the heifer of that, and the horse of another. Then, in the midst of a deluge of quotations, were enumerated all the larcenies mentioned in Genesis; the Medes, the Assyrians, the Romans, the Carthaginians, appeared by turns on the scene of action in due order, as chronology allowed of it. When I saw that there never would be an end of this I interrupted the translator.—

“Enough, enough,” said I.

“No, no, *par Dieu*, you must hear this. Here is a dissertation of a very curious nature; it relates to the two thieves between whom Jesus Christ was crucified.”

The author was making a research as to what might be their names.

“But what avails their names?”

“Ah, sir! when we turn to the past, there is no small research. Do you know that if they could contrive to learn the name of one of the two, of the good one for instance, it would create a great commotion at Rome; for he is, of course, in heaven; the Saviour has told us. There would be a canonization, an upsetting of the legend, a revolution in the calendar, the pope would never have canonized with greater certainty; he would have the word of him whom he represents; what work! it would be infallible this time.”

“All this is possible; but I will tell you frankly that I care not a straw about it.”

“Ah! I see it; the historical part fatigues you; you are a man of deeds, M. Vidocq; let us pass to the practical part.”

“Yes, let us pass to the practical part, here I expect much.”

“You will be content with him.”

“What says your doctor?”

“I have it here; attention. ‘If you have been robbed, and would really desire to discover the author

of your loss, begin by consulting your planet; remember under what star you were born; in which of his twelve houses the sun has just entered; examine at what point of the zodiac he was *in hora natali*; if it were under the sign of the Scales, it is good: there is justice to be had, the thief will be hanged without remission. Then you must have observed the conjunction of Mars and Venus, the state of the sky has so much influence over our destinies; observe the position of Mercury at the precise hour when you came into the world; the hour when you first remarked that you had been robbed; calculate, compare, follow Mercury, do not lose sight of him, it is he who carries off what you have lost; if you cannot stop him, take the rosary of a patient who died in a fit of laughter, cross yourself seven times, recite on the cord five *Paters* and three *Aves* and finish with a *Credo*, which you must say without a pause, from beginning to end, without taking breath: faith is necessary; after that, drink fasting a large glass of water."

"Yes, believe and drink, of course; but, learned sir, your famous treatise *De famosis* is but a collection of ridiculous idle stories."

"What, sir, idle stories! the author gives his authorities, fifty pages of names, at the end of the book, poets, orators, historians, polygraphs."

"Does he also mention the spies?"

"He speaks of Argus and Briareus."

"I hope that the one was a famous agent of police, with his hundred eyes! and the other, with his hundred arms, —what a gendarme!"

The pundit was infatuated with his acquisition, and whatever I said to prove that his book was a tissue of nonsense and absurdity, he went away perfectly convinced that he had made me a very valuable present, but that from vanity I would not allow its value.

I am sure that, in his estimation, Godefroid far outweighed Vidocq, and yet all the knowledge of the ancient worthy whose lessons he proposed to me were

limited to superstitious ceremonies. Faith was necessary as to the disciples of M. Cousin; faith is still alive, very lively and robust! After the burning of the bazaar Boufflers, did I not see a nosegay of violets on the walls, to discover whether or not the premises had been wilfully set on fire? if there had been malice in the case, the nosegay would catch fire the moment it was presented to the place where the fire had commenced; some witnesses *saw the flame*, the nosegay was consumed; the fact is authenticated,—it was like the apparition of the cross of Migné.

The pope, cardinals, bishops, archbishops, God himself uniting with the philosophers of the age, would not extirpate credulity; the prince of Hohenlohe would still perform miracles, there would be still conjurers, they would still cast nativities, consult coffee-grounds, whites of eggs, dreams, signs, marks, sounds, and wonders. Old Mother Lenormand, Mad. Mathurin, Fortuné, and all the sorcerers and sorceresses of Paris, the magnetisers inclusive, would not be the less resorted to, whenever a robbery was committed, and most frequently before any declaration had been made to the police. What is the consequence? Whilst they have recourse to supernatural means, the stolen property is lost past recovery; the thief has had time to take all precautions to avoid detection, and when, after having exhausted the resources of magic and divination, they present themselves at the office, in the little Rue Sainte Anne, to invoke the ministry and aid of the “Chef de la Sûreté,” as there is no trace of the misdemeanour, the investigation is fruitless, and the plunderer is the only one who can apply, whilst laughing in his sleeve, that favourite proverb of the weak and silly, “*Faith alone can save us.*”

If the multitude had a little more confidence in my reliques than in those of my successor, it was that I was sometimes incomprehensible to them. On how many occasions have I not overwhelmed with amazement the persons who came to complain of any robbery! Scarcely had they related two or three circumstances, when I was immediately in possession of the whole

facts; I concluded their story; or, without waiting for more explanations, I said, "*the thief is so and so*" They were thunderstruck; were they grateful? I think not; for generally the complainant remained persuaded either that I had committed the robbery, or that I had made a compact with the devil. Such was the belief of my worthy applicants, that they could not suppose my information derived from any other sources. The opinion that I was an *operative*, or rather the instigator of a great many robberies, was most general and widely extended. They asserted that I was in direct relation with the most expert thieves in Paris; that I had my information from them beforehand of the robberies they contemplated; and that if they had been prevented from informing me previously, for fear of losing a good opportunity, they did not fail, after a successful operation, to give me a share of the spoil.

They added, that I was associated in the profits of their industry, and only allowed them to be apprehended at the moment when their activity was no longer productive to me. They were, it must be confessed, admirable fellows, thus to sacrifice to a man who, sooner or later, would give them up to justice! But there is no excess of absurdity which is not imagined in this nether world; but as in the most absurd idea there maybe a faint glimmering of truth, this brings us to the point whence we started. Interested, from duty, to know, as well as possible, all the professed thieves, male and female, I endeavoured to be informed exactly as to the state of their finances, and if I learned that an advantageous change had taken place in their affairs, I naturally concluded that they had been levying a tax somewhere. If the amelioration of their condition accorded with any notice left at the office, the conclusion was more probable still. Still it was but conjecture; but I had an account rendered to me of the smallest particular that could in any way enlighten me on the method of execution adopted to consummate the crime. I went to the place myself, and frequently

before any search was commenced, I said to the party aggrieved, "Be still, I am sure of discovering the plunderers, as well as their booty." The following fact, the only one I will adduce, will prove this:—

Monsieur Prunaud, a dealer in curiosities and fashionable trinkets, in the Rue Saint Denis, had been robbed during the night. They had effected an entrance by force into his warehouse, whence they had carried off fifty pieces of India muslin, and many valuable shawls. The next morning M. Prunaud came in haste to my office, and had not finished the account of his loss, when I named to him the authors of it: "It can only have been done," said I, "by *Berthe*, *Mongadart*, and their gang."

I instantly set my agents to work, to whom I gave orders to learn if they were spending money in a lavish manner. A few hours afterwards they came to tell me that the two individuals on whom my suspicions had fallen had been met at a notorious place, in company with *Toulouse* and *Riveraud*, alias *Morosini*; that they were newly dressed, and that, by all appearance, they had full pockets, as they had been seen in company with some girls. I knew who was their *fence*, ordered that a search should be made at his house, and the property was discovered. The fence could not avoid his fate—he was sent to the galleys. As for the thieves, that they might be brought to trial, it was necessary to obtain evidence by means of a stratagem of my concoction, which succeeding, they were apprehended and convicted.

To be at the height of my employment, it was absolutely necessary that I should be able to conjecture with some justice; frequently I was so sure of my men, that I not only gave their names and residences off-hand, but I detailed their precise mode of action, and indicated the way in which they had proceeded to complete the robbery. The vulgar, who are ignorant of the resources of the police, cannot conceive how any one can be innocent, and yet have so much perspicuity.

For those who never reflect, the illusion is such that, without the least malevolence towards me, it was probable to suppose a connivance and understanding which did not exist; but a good half of the inhabitants of Paris believed that I had the gift of seeing every thing, hearing every thing, of knowing every thing: and it is not exaggeration to say that I was, in their eyes, like the Solitary, and therefore they invoked my assistance on every emergency, and three-fourths of the times in matters concerning which it was impossible that I could afford them the least assistance. No idea can be formed of the whimsical and ridiculous requests and statements which were sent to me. It would be necessary to be present at one of those audiences, during which the public were admitted into the Bureau de Sûreté. A countryman enters.

"Sir, I was walking in the Jardin des Plantes, and whilst I was a-looking at the beastes, up comes a gentleman, dressed for all the world as fine as a lord, and says he to me, says he, A'n't you from Bourgogne? So I says, says I, that I be sure enough. Well, he told me that he was from Joigny, where he dealt in wood. We found that we were fellow-countrymen, and then he said we would go and see *la tête du mort* (the death's head). I assure you he was uncommon civil; I didn't think there was nothing wrong, and away I goes with him; and as we were going out of the garden who should we meet at the gate but some others as he knowed. One was a dealer in linen."

"Two of them, were there not? A young and old man."

"Yes, sir."

"The old man had been taking wine at the dépôt?"

"Yes, sir."

"I see your business; they trapped you?"

"Faith, you are right; three thousand francs they got from me! a thousand crowns, in beautiful twenty-franc pieces."

"Ah, it was gold! Did they not bid you conceal it?"

"Deed did they, and conceal it so well that, dash my buttons, if I could find it again."

"Ah! I know your men. Goury, (one of my agents to whom I addressed myself,) these must be *Hermelle*, *Desplanques*, and the *Père de famille* (Family man)."

AGENT. "It has all the appearance of being them."

"Had not one of them a long nose?"

"Yes, a precious long 'un."

"I see I am not mistaken."

"Oh no! you have clapt your finger on the chap at the very first time: some people would guess twice first. A long nose! Ah Monsieur Vidocq! you are a good fellow. Now I am no longer uneasy."

"Why?"

"Since they are your friends who have robbed me, it will be easy for you to recover my money: only let it be soon—if possible this very day."

"We do not go to work so quickly."

"Why it is, you see, because I must return home. My house will not go on well whilst I am away: I have left my wife quite alone; and then, you must know, the fair of Auxerre is in four days from this."

"Oh! you are in a hurry, my good man."

"Yes I am; but listen, we can manage? only give me fifteen hundred francs now down on the nail, and I will let you off free for all the rest. That's coming to the point, an't it? I think nobody can be more accommodating."

"True; but I do not make my bargains in this way."

"But yet it all can be done, if you will agree."

The Bourguignon having been heard, it was the turn of a Chevalier de Malta, who had apparently obtained a dispensation of marriage; for he was accompanied by his noble spouse, who brought her Bonne with her.

The CHEVALIER. "Sir, I am the marquis *Dubois-velez*, an old emigré, and have given unequivocal testimonies of my attachment to the Bourbon family."

VIDOCQ. "That does you honour, sir; but what may be your business with me?"

The CHEVALIER. "I come nere to beg you will be so kind as to have a search set on foot for my servant, who has made off from my house with a sum of three thousand seven hundred and fifty francs, and a gold chased watch on which I set a very considerable value."

VIDOCQ. "Is this all that has been stolen from you?"

The CHEVALIER. "I believe so."

The LADY. "No doubt he has taken other property. You know very well, Marquis, that for a long time not a day has passed but you have missed sometimes one thing, sometimes another."

The CHEVALIER. "True, Madame la Marquise; but at present let us only talk of the three thousand seven hundred and fifty francs, and the watch. The watch must be had, whatever it cost me. It suffices to say, that it was given me by the late Madame de Vellerhil, my mother-in-law: you know that I would not lose it."

VIDOCQ. "It is possible, sir, that you will not lose it: but, in the first place, I shall be obliged to you to give me the names, surname and christian, and the description of your servant."

The CHEVALIER. "His name! That is not difficult. His name is Laurent."

VIDOCQ. "What country does he come from?"

The CHEVALIER. "I think from Normandy."

The LADY. "You are wrong, my friend. Laurent is a Champenois. I have heard him say twenty times that he was born at Saint Quentin. Besides Cunégonde can clear up this point.—(*Turning towards the Bonne*)—Cunégonde, was not Laurent a Champenois?"

CUNEGONDE. "I beg pardon of Madame la Marquise, but I think he came from Lorraine. When he had a letter, it always had the post-mark of Dijon."

VIDOCQ. "You do not seem unanimous on the place of his birth; and besides, Laurent is probably only his baptismal name: and there is 'more than one ass at the fair called Martin.' It will be necessary for you to tell

me his family name, or at least that you give me so accurate a description of his person that he must be recognised."

THE CHEVALIER. "His family name! I do not know if he ever had one: those persons seldom have any: they have usually only what is given to them. I called him Laurent, because it suited me, and because it was the name of his predecessor: names are transmitted with the livery. As to his country, have I not told you he comes either from Normandy, Champagne, Picardy, or Lorraine? As to his person, his stature is of the common size. His eyes—good heaven, he has eyes like everybody else in the world—like—like you, like me, like the lady. His nose has nothing remarkable. His mouth is—I have never looked particularly at his mouth. If we have a servant, it is to wait upon us: you must know that no one thinks of looking at him. As well as I remember, he was brown or deep chestnut colour.

MADAME. "My dear Marquis, I have some idea that he was fair."

CUNEGONDE. "Fair as a gipsy, then. He was as red as a carrot."

THE CHEVALIER. "Possibly, but that is of very little consequence. What M. Vidocq needs to know is, that before the robbery, I called him Laurent, and he must still answer to that name, unless he may have assumed another."

VIDOCQ. "Very true: M. de Lapalisse could not have spoken more oracularly. However, you will agree with me, that to guide me in my search, some details rather more explicit and less vague are indispensable to me."

THE CHEVALIER. "I know not how to give you any more accurate. But in my estimation, these should suffice: with a little address, your men will soon lay hands on the fellow; and they will speedily learn where he is spending my money."

VIDOCQ. "I should be greatly flattered if I could

be of any service to you; but with such indefinite descriptions how do you suppose I can set out in the affair?"

The CHEVALIER. "Yet I come here with description so positive, that you have only, in my idea, to wish, and you will get hold of the man; it is a job half finished which I bring to you. Perhaps I have not told you his age, he may be thirty or forty."

CUNEGONDE. "He was not so old, Monsieur le Marquis, he was not more than twenty-four, or twenty-five years of age."

The CHEVALIER. "Twenty-four, twenty-eight, thirty, forty, it is indifferent."

VIDOCQ. "Not so much so as you may imagine. But, sir, this servant came to you from somewhere or some place; of course he was recommended to you by somebody?"

The CHEVALIER. "By nobody, sir; a driver of a cabriolet sent him to me, that's all."

VIDOCQ. "Had he a character?"

The CHEVALIER. "Certainly not, he had none."

VIDOCQ. "He had some recommendation, testimonials?"

The CHEVALIER. "He showed me some papers, but that is all nothing, I did not pay any attention to them."

VIDOCQ. "In that case, how can you imagine that I can find the thief? You offer me nothing, absolutely nothing, which can give me the smallest clue to the affair."

The CHEVALIER. "You are joking, surely; I offer you nothing! Why for a quarter of an hour I have been at the trouble of talking to you. I have answered all your questions. If it be necessary to put the thieves into your hands, what need is there of police? Ah! it was not so with M. de Sartines. I need not have told him the hundredth part of what I have just communicated to you and my servant, my watch and my money would have been all forthcoming instantly."

VIDOCQ. "He was a great man, M. de Sartines. But as for me I do not undertake to work miracles."

The CHEVALIER. "Well, sir, I shall go immediately to the prefect to complain of your careless conduct. Since you refuse to act, my friends on the right side, the deputies of my province, shall know that the police is good for nothing, and they will utter it in the tribune: I have credit, influence—and I will exercise them, and then we shall see."

VIDOCQ. "Well, Monsieur le Marquis, go, a pleasant walk to you."

To this enraged elderly succeeded a man in a fustian coat, who thus spake:

"Be this here the master of the spies, the chap what ketches they thieves in such style, eh?"

"Well, my friend, what do you want?"

"Why I wants this here, a silver watch which somebody has done me out on, in a place where I was."

"Well, my lad, how did it happen? tell me all that occurred."

"Why then, d'ye see, my name's Louis Virlouvét, a farmer, and vine-dresser in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, lawfully married to my missus; a father of a family, with four young 'uns, of which my wife is mother. She and I com'd to Paris to buy some tubs, and as I was a-walking along, a-doing nor a-thinking o' nothing, I comes to a place not far from here, when, saving your presence, I felt hard pressed to ——. I stopped before a wall, y'see, and I unbuttons my smalls, and just as I was easing o' myself, somebody hits me a douse on the back. I turns round, and who should I see but a young lass, who says, says she, What! my lad Theodore! what is that you my lad? Come, and let's ha' a buss o' thy cheek, my darling; and so before you could cry pars-nips, she kisses me, and then axes me if I'll go and have a drop o' summut wi' her. Now, as I am a vine-dresser ye know, and we vine-dressers are always ready for a drop, I was quite willing. She tells me she has a young friend that she wants to fetch. Well, says I, go

and fetch her, but stir yer stumps and make haste back d'yé see. Away trots madam, and I waits; but as she did not come back, I got a-tired a waiting for she, and a-going to pull out my watch to see what's o'clock, I'm d—— if there was e'er a watch left in my fob! It had melted like butter in a hot hand. Then, says I to myself, I'm done, and my watch is gone without saying good-by. I runs as hard as I could the same way she had gone, but no sight of madam; and the chaps I asked, told me as how I had best come here, and that your men would find my silver watch, what cost fifty-five francs, what I bought at Pontoise, at a watchmaking man's; what went like an angel, a-pointing out the days of the month, with a lock of my daughter's hair all done up by herself, nothing was ever more beatifuller."

"Did you look what sort of a woman she was?"

"What, she that robbed me?"

"Why, yes."

"She is rather old, her youth has past; she is like the gammon of bacon, neither too fat, nor too lean; she is between stoutish and thinnish; she is p'raps about five feet (French measure) all but eight or nine inches, thick about her size, with a lace cap, cocked up nose rather a biggish 'un. Let's see, how big's her nose? why I'll tell you; here, as big as this weight, like a pear, on your papers, to hinder the wind from blowing them away, or within the size of it by a horse hair; with a red petticoat, blue eyes, a shell snuff-box of a rose colour, which was full."

"You give me a very singular account; these are all false details which you have given me: I am convinced that you were not robbed on the highway; for to have observed all these details you must have seen the woman for some time, and that pretty closely. Come, come, instead of giving us long stories not founded on common sense, confess that you allowed yourself to be tempted into a bad house, and that whilst you were there, your watch disappeared."

"I see as it is no manner of use to conceal anything from you, Yes, you are quite right."

"Then why give me a false account?"

"Because I was bid to tell you what I did, to get my silver watch back, as cost me fifty-five francs."

"Can you point out the house where you went with this woman?"

"Certainly; it's a house on the first floor, in a room with a table, at the corner of the street."

"Well if faith you give a very precise account to enable us to discover the place."

"Ah, so much the better; I shall get my watch back again, shall I not, sir?"

"I did not say so, for you have given too vague a description."

"What! did I not just tell you that she had red eyes; I mean a red petticoat and blue eyes, and a lace cap; is not that clear enough—lace? I do not remember the colour of her stockings, but I know that she had packthread garters, and her shoes tied with the same; after this you don't want no dots to your i's; you know how to go to work. As soon as you give me my silver watch of fifty-five francs, I will give you a bottle and ten francs for your comrades to drink."

"I am much obliged to you, but I never work interestedly."

"Ah, that's all very good and very fine, but the priest must live by the altar, and every one does by his trade, you know."

"I ask you for nothing."

"Yes, yes, but you will get back my watch of fifty-five francs?"

"Yes, if she bring it to me I will send it to you."

"I rely on you, at least do not go to put me in the box with the forgotten you know."

"Be easy."

"Well, I wish you a very good day, master."

"Farewell."

"Good-by till I see you again."

The vine-dresser being dismissed with all the hopes which his violation of the marriage contract could suggest, I saw one of those good shopkeepers of the Rue Saint Denis, whose forehead, however insignificant it may be, reminds one perpetually of poor Acteon.

"Sir, (said the citizen,) I have come to ask you to commence a search for my wife, who decamped yesterday with my clerk. I know not the route they have taken, but they cannot be far on the road. For they have carried off booty with them—money and goods; they have carried off every thing, and they may escape! Oh, if they are not taken, I would rather lose my Latin. I am sure they are still in Paris, and if you commence a search forthwith we shall catch them."

"I must observe to you, that we do not commence our operations without some arrangement; we require an order for marching: begin by making against madame your wife and the ravisher, a complaint of adultery, in which you must accuse the latter of having carried off your effects and goods."

"Oh yes I will lodge a complaint, and whilst I am losing my time the traitors will get away."

"That is probable."

"Such delays when there is danger so near! My wife is my wife: every day, every night her fault is of more consequence. I am a husband, I am outraged: I am in my own right. She will only have children, and who will be the father? he will not be the father, I shall. No, since there is no divorce, the law ought to have foreseen"—

"Well, sir, the law has foreseen nothing, there is a prescribed form, and it cannot be dispensed with."

"Very fine, truly; form and ceremony! if it be so, well may we say, that forms empty our pockets. Poor husbands!"

"I know very well that you are much to be pitied, but I can do nothing in the affair; besides you are not a solitary sufferer."

"Ah, Monsieur Jules, you who are so obliging: do

be so good as to have them apprehended this very day ; take that upon yourself ; I beseech you do not refuse me, and you shall find that I am not ungrateful."

" I repeat to you, sir, that to do what you desire, I must have a mandate from the judicial authority."

" Well, well ; I see but too plainly that they will deprive me of wife and fortune ! Who will they protect ?—Vice. It is very worthy of the police, certainly ! If it were the arrest of a Bonapartist you would be all at work : but it is a deceived husband, and no one stirs a step. It is delightful to see how the police conduct themselves ; so when you see me again it shall be good for your eyes. My wife may return when she chooses, and if she is carried off again it will not be to you that I shall address myself : God protect me from such !"

The husband withdrew, very discontented, and it was announced to me that an original solicited a moment's conversation. He appeared. He had a long body, long coat, long waistcoat, long arms, long legs, a long, pale, icy, deathly, emaciated face, rising from a long stiff neck, like the rest of the long figure which belonged to him. The whole seemed to move on springs. At the sight of this automaton, his pigtail, which reached down to his loins, his loose gaiters, his rumpled shirt, his broad collar, his enormous sleeves, his large umbrella, and his small silk hat, I was constrained to do my utmost to avoid laughing in his face, so much did his comic air tally with his grotesque attire.

" Deign, sir," said I to him, " to be seated, and inform me of the motive which brings you hither."

" Mounseer, I hintroduce myself to you from Mister Lowender,* constable in Bowe street in the capital of Great Britain ; he recommended me to you, mounseer, to find my vife, who is making me a —— here in Paris with von Mounseer Gaviani, a Hitalian hoffer, what lodged in the public ouse."

* Query Lavender ?—TRANSL.

"I am in despair, sir, to be compelled to refuse my aid in such a search. If it be only a search of this nature, I can tell you of a person who, for a certain sum, will do all that is requisite under these circumstances."

"Yes yes; a search warrant—I understand you; you make me very satisfied."

"Give me, if you please, the name of your wife, her description, and all the details which appear to you proper to direct our search."

"To direct you, I tell you my wife's name is Missus Becoot, 'cause I'm Muster Becoot, of the same family as my brother who is called Becoot, and our father before us was called Becoot. My wife and I was married in Lunnun in eighteen hundred and fifteen: she was handsome; she was fair; her eyes was black; her nose was elegant; her teeth white and little; she had a good deal of—front—bustom, and spoke French better than I do.—If you find where she is, I will take possession on her, and conduct her back to Lunnun by the first vessel."

"I think I told you, sir, that it was not I who would undertake the charge of this search; but I will put you in a way to do it effectually, by introducing you forthwith to a person who will enter fully into your views. Givet, go and request the Duc de Modène to come here at his earliest convenience with 'le Père Martin.'" (The Duc de Modène was the nickname of a secret agent, a man of good conduct and air, whom I sent to the gambling houses.)

"Oh oh! you are a-going to introduce me to a duke. I am enchanted! a duke! a real live duke! If he can surprise my wife with this here officer, and get me the divorce I want, he is my man of wax."

"I will engage that he shall find them together; I will even undertake that you shall surprise them in bed, if you like."

"Oh oh! in bed! that would be better than the divorce. For a criminal confession, evidence, nothing is better than

finding in bed together—Ah, mounseer, I am much hindebted to you.”

The Duc de Modène was not long in making his appearance, and as soon as he entered M. Becoot, having arisen and saluted him with a triple reverence, spoke to him in these terms:—

“Mounseer Duke, I vants you to render a service to a misfortunate husband, who has bin forsaken by his wife.”

The agent, who was not free of contempt towards the English, did not fail to assume the air of importance which accorded with the title which had been bestowed on him. After having arranged with all dignity the terms for his services, and taken notes of the indications which M. Becoot furnished, he promised to open the campaign instantly, that he might the sooner attain the desired result. The conversation was on this point, when I was requested by a messenger to attend at the office of the Attorney-General (*Procureur du Roi*). I consequently left M. Becoot, and the audience was closed until next day. Since I am in the mood for digressing, before I return to the categories, the reader may not be displeased to learn the conclusion of this affair with M. Becoot.

Forty-eight hours had scarcely elapsed, when the Duc de Modène came to tell me that he had discovered the retreat of the unfaithful one; she was with her Italian; and although they were on their guard, because they had learnt the arrival of the husband, he was certain that he could detect them in his presence, in the midst of proofs of that horizontal intimacy which, as far as conviction is concerned, leaves nothing to be desired. Whilst the duke was explaining to me the stratagem which he proposed to make use of, entered M. Becoot, and, as I had anticipated, he was accompanied by his brother, another Britannic caricature. “Two make a pair,” observed my agent, aside.

“Good day, Mounseer Védoc—ah, here is Mister the Duke, I hoffer him my politeness”

"Monsieur le Duc has great news for you."

"Ah, ah! great news! You've found 'em, eh?—You may speak out afore mounseer; mounseer is a Becoot; he was my twin-brother. You've found 'em,—really found 'em, eh?"

"Come, Monsieur le Duc, tell these gentlemen what you have to say."

"Yes, yes; tell us, Mounseer le Duke."

"Well, then, I have found them; and, as you wish it, I will show them to you both in the same bed."

"In the same béd!" cried M. Becoot's brother; "that vill be a vonder of nater! a miracle! You're a conjurer, Mounseer Duke."

"I swear to you, that there is no conjuration in the matter! It is all a matter of physics."

"Yes, yes, physic (*laughing*), ah, ah, ah! rummish physic, I reckon."

"Since they sleep together."

"Yes, yes; nateral, wery nateral, in the same bed; charming cohabitation! charming!"

"Charming!" re-echoed the brother-in-law of Madame Becoot, whose husband, laughing with all his might, evinced his delight at the fact by contortions and grimaces the most burlesque.

Mrs. Becoot and her lover had lodged for some months in the Rue Feydeau, at the house of one of those ladies who, for their own particular profit, and the accommodation of strangers, keep a table d'hôte and an écarté table; but anticipating persecutions, on the news of the arrival of the twin brothers, the adulterous couple took refuge at Belleville, where a general known to the lady gave them shelter. It was decided that they should seek them at this asylum; and as M. Becoot was in haste, it was decided that they should hurry on the *dénouement*.

The next day was Sunday, and there was to be a grand dinner at the general's, after which, according to the custom of the house, play would be introduced. The Duc de Modène, long known as a thorough *leg*,

had a good pretext for introducing himself at a meeting where the *Greeks* were admitted without difficulty. Going to Belleville when the evening drew on, he went to the salon of the general, and staid there till two o'clock in the morning, when he went out to rejoin the two brothers, who were in a hired carriage not far from thence.

"Now for it," said the duke; "the couple are between the sheets."

"Between the sheets!" cried M. Becoot.

"Yes, sir, between the sheets; I have almost assisted in putting them to bed; and if you have courage enough to dare to climb, I will undertake to lead you to the alcove, when you will only have to draw the curtain."

"Vat d'ye say?—climb! What do you mean?"

"We must get over the garden wall."

"*Goddem!* get over the wall! Now, you see, if we climbs, the servants will call out thief.—No, no; no climbing for me; and the guns and pistols bang, bang, pop, pop, over head and heels I shall pitch—and Mounseer Gaviani will rejoice! No, no!—no climbing, my hearty!"

"Yet you must, if you would have the offence decidedly proved."

"The Becoots, Mounseer le Duke, are not fond o' running risks."

"Then we must seize on the delinquents out of the general's house; that is the only way to incur no risk. I know that after the breakfast, they will get into a coach, which will take them to Paris; what say you to apprehend them in the coach?"

"In the coach?—yes, yes, for prudence sake."

The Duc de Modène, his auxiliary *le Père Martin*, and the two islanders, placed themselves as sentinels to watch the departure. M. Becoot asked a thousand questions, and made a thousand and one reflections, more ridiculous each than the other. At length, about two o'clock in the afternoon, a coach stopped at the

door; a moment afterwards it was opened for Madame Becoot and her cavalier. We may suppose that at this sight M. Becoot could no longer restrain his indignation;—he did not even frown. Your English husbands are marvellous men.

“You see, you see,” he said to his brother, “my wife with her hinamurato.”

“Yes, yes, I see. He was in the coach.”

They found that the vehicle was directed to the Rue Feydeau. The Englishmen ordered their coachman to whip along, that they might get there first; and when they had reached the Porte Saint Denis, at the spot where a staircase leads to the Boulevard *Bonne Nouvelle*, they alighted. They soon perceived the coach, which was advancing at a gentle pace. The agents walked forward to stop it; and M. Becoot, having opened the door, said, with inconceivable phlegm,—

“Ah! good day, mounseer. I beg your pardon, I’ve come for my wife, that you have been pleased to valk off with.”

“Come, ma’am,” added the brother, “don’t go to make him a—— no more; come along.”

Gaviani and Madame Becoot were perfectly terrified. Without any reply, they both alighted; and whilst the Italian gave up the contested prize, compelled to obey, the unfortunate lady was pitilessly installed in the other coach between the two Becoots, facing the two officers. Everybody was silent; when Madame Becoot, a little recovered from the alarm, cried from the window—

“Gaviani! Gaviani, my friend! be tranquil and assured that I will only abandon you with life.”

“’Old yer tongue, Mrs. Becoot,” said her husband, coolly, “I horder you to be silent, ma’am. You are a faithless voman, you are a bad voman. Are you so shame-faced as to call Mounseer Gaviani? You are a felon, ma’am, a great felon: I will ’ave you put in the black-’ole.”

“You will do nothing.”

"I will! I will!" he stammered out, balancing his head between the handles of two umbrellas, which, made of bucks' horn, formed a singular accompaniment to his brow."

"M. Becoot, all you can do will be useless. Ah! my dear Gaviani."

"Gaviani again! Gaviani for ever!"

"Yes, for ever. I detest you; I abhor you."

"You are my wife."

"But answer me, M. Becoot, are you fitted to have a wife? You are ugly, you are old, you are ridiculous, and you are jealous."

"I am good reason to be jealous."

"You wish to have a divorce, have I not given you full opportunity? I fly you; and what more would you have?"

"I want to be a —— legally."

"Would you have the scandal of it?"

"You want to —— me in your own way: I want it to be done in a satisfactory manner in my own way: I want to be a ——, with justice and publicity, so as to get a sentence."

"You are a monster in my eyes; you are a tyrant: I will never stay with you."

"You shall stay for the present."

"You shall not have me alive then;" and thus menacing, she made a gesture as though to tear her face with her hands.

"Ketch 'old on her 'ands, brother." The brother did hold her hands; and then, after a brief struggle, she became more composed; but the sparkle of her eye betrayed the anger and fire that was within.

Roused, enraged, but handsome withal as much as passion can be, near these heteroclite beings—these immovable and vacant faces—she looked like the Queen of Bacchantes between two baboons, or rather a volcano of love between two peaks of ice. But, notwithstanding, the return of M. Becoot to the hotel where he was lodg-

ing was a triumph. His first care was to shut her up in a room, the key of which he intrusted to no one: but when a husband becomes his wife's gaoler, it is so agreeable to her to deceive his vigilance! We know the song—*Malgré les verroux et les grilles*, &c. *Spite of bolts and iron bars*, &c.

The third day of this conjugal captivity, Madame Becoot grew tired of her cage. The fourth, I called on M. Becoot: it was not twelve o'clock: I found him at table with his brother, facing a plum-pudding and a dozen bottles of Champagne, the corks of which they had already taken out."

"A good day, *bonne jor*, Mounseer Vaidoc, you are werry purlite to come and give us a call. Vat say you to a drop o' Champayne?"

"Thank you; I never drink fasting."

"You are not an Englishman, then."

"Well, you are now as happy as possible; the Duc de Modène has restored you your wife. I compliment you on it."

"Compliment! *Goddem*, she's hoff agen!"

"What! could you not keep her?"

"She was carried hoff, I tell you, the felon!"

"Since it is so, do not let us say any more about it."

"No, say no more about it, drink Champagne; he is no felon."

These gentlemen again insisted that I should keep them company, but as I was compelled to preserve my head cool and clear, I begged them to excuse me, and, after congratulating them, took leave. They certainly were soon afterwards under the table.

In this way does your genuine Englishman cool his anger and slake his animosity; they are drowned in pint bumpers and brimming goblets, and if when he sleeps they call him *coucou*, and at his waking, pointing to him with his finger, say, *Ah, there he is*, he laughs angrily, and rather than hide his head, the tipler grows enraged. He will have an inquiry—gets a divorce. Whose is the fault? Gaviani's? Bergami's? the Prin-

cess's, or the god's who made her so handsome? No: To whom then? To porter, port, burgundy, champagne, in fact, to Bacchus, under every disguise, form, shape, and colour.

But why should I seek to penetrate the fog which envelopes manners not our own? We live on the banks of the Seine—why trouble ourselves as to what passes on the banks of the Thames? Perhaps some English Vidocq will one day teach us. Until then, I confine myself to the episode of M. Becoot, whom I never saw again.

But I return to *mes moutons*, that is, to my categories.

The distinction of thieves, according to the line of business they follow, would be of little import if, at the same time that I unveil the means exercised by them to live at our expense, I did not point out what precautions should be taken to place ourselves out of the reach of their attempts.

If they carried off but a tenth of the superfluities, perhaps there might be some cruelty in seeking to prevent them from procuring the necessary means of existence; but as, considering the hazard of their mode of subsistence, between Irus and Cræsus (the beggar and the king), they do not always choose, but take indifferently from where there is too much, and where there is not enough; and as, besides, they take also to lavish profusely, I will, without mercy, open my battery upon them with all my skill, so as to beat down and make a breach in their industry, and, if it be possible, to put it *au sac*, according to the expression of our old *Polyarcetes*, I mean the old chroniclers, or rather romancers.

No capital in the world, London excepted, has within it so many thieves as Paris. The pavement of the modern Lutetia is incessantly trodden by rogues. It is not surprising; for the facility of hiding themselves in the crowd makes all that are badly disposed resort thither, whether French or foreign. The greater number are fixed constantly in this vast city; some only come like

birds of passage, at the approach of great occasions, or during the summer season. Besides these exotics, there are indigenous plants, which make a fraction in the population, of which the denominator is tolerably high. I leave to the great calculator, M. Charles Dupin, the task of enumerating them in decimals, and telling us if the sum that it amounts to should not be taken into consideration in the application of the black list.

Parisian robbers, in general, hate the provincial thieves; they have, and justly, the character of making no difficulty in selling their comrades to preserve their liberty. Thus, when by such a circumstance they are thrown out of their sphere, they do not easily find any person to associate with; besides, they have a great predilection for the place of their birth. The children of Paris cannot separate themselves from their mother; they have for her a depth of inexhaustible tenderness:

A tous les cœurs bien nés, que la patrie est chère !

Transported to a department, a Parisian thief is completely out of his latitude. Had he been flung from the moon like an aërolite, he could not be more bewildered, more awkward—he is a cockney, a thorough cockney in every sense of the word; at every moment he fears to take a dog for a fox. It is terrible when a man does not feel his way and know his ground! he knows not where or how to put his hands or feet, and is, perhaps, walking on burning coals, *cineri doloso*. He dares not advance a step, because he has a bandeau over his eyes, and if he should get into a difficulty, no one is at hand to cry “Take care;” on the contrary they are amused to see him in peril, because they think him a coward. If he embark in any plot, they leave him to finish it; or if in his road he meet a gendarme, never mind, ill luck to him, bad fortune befall him.

In a small town a thief is completely out of his element; he is like a hen with only one chick, like a fish in a net, a fish in a frying-pan; it is not his natural place; there is too much quiet in a circumscribed city, too much tranquillity, circulation goes on much

too regularly, too clearly ; much more is he at his ease in the midst of tumult, confusion, bustle, embarrassment, disorder, and a troubled and muddy stream of affairs. All these advantages are concentrated in Paris, in the limited but well-filled department of the Seine, in a periphery of from five to six leagues, in a space which would scarcely suffice for the formation of a park for a great man. Paris is but a point, a dot, a speck on the globe, but that point is a cloaca. At this point rally all sorts ; at this point myriads of possessors of life *par excellence* meet, pass, repass, cross, jostle, disturb, and live. The Parisian thief is habituated to this hurly burly, this assemblage ; and out of its sphere of action he wanders vaguely, and his talent is lost, extinct. He knows it very well, and what proves it incontestably is, that if he can only contrive to escape from the bagne, it is always to the capital that he flies on outstretched wing ; he will soon again be caught—but what then ? He will have once more worked in his own way, and in his peculiar element.

Provincial thieves come soon enough to Paris ; not that the climate suits them better than any other, but they are a species of cosmopolites, who find that place their home, and that country their fatherland where there is any thing to be stolen. *Ubi bene ibi patria*, (where there are the means of subsistence, there is my country) is their motto ; they will accommodate themselves equally well when resident at Rome as at Pekin, if there be plunder attainable. They have neither the agreeable exterior, nor the subtle plans, nor the lofty demeanour of the Parisian plunderer, and were they to live for an age in Paris they would always be clowns (*yckels*). *Les amis de Pantin* (the men of Paris) would always reproach them with being made of a *handful of blunders*, and without resemblance to any thing that has a human appearance. Their conduct and manners are their weak and failing points ; they have no urbanity ; and do what they can or will, they will never be perfumed by that Attic flower whose

charming odour delights and overcomes the brilliant and frivolous world, which can only be duped after it has been seduced. They are destitute of that sharp wit which, under certain circumstances, gives to the indigenous thief a decided superiority ; but yet they have more capacity. Beneath a rough, unpolished exterior they conceal a share of astuteness and finesse which, in first-rate enterprises, make them competent to surmount obstacles opposed to them, and to acquire the confidence of reflective persons. Consult the archives of crime, of all extensive robberies, all daring and deeply-planned plundering, and they will be found the work and deed of provincial robbers. They are not timorous, but bold, persevering, reflective. They plan well, they execute still better.

The original robbers by profession in the capital are seldom assassins ; they have a horror of blood, and when they do shed it, it is always with regret, and under circumstances unforeseen and unprovided for, into which they have been involuntarily urged. It is very rare that they are provided with arms, and they only use them to escape, in case they are in danger of being apprehended in the commission of some act of robbery. The great crimes of which Paris is occasionally the theatre, are generally perpetrated by strangers. One particularity is very singular : it is that assassinations are generally committed by some novice, in the commencement of his career. This is true, perfectly true, although it may displease those observing moralists who repeat after the poet :—

*Ainsi que la vertu le crime a ses degrés.**

Before the commission of a bad action, experienced thieves calculate the consequences of the enterprise which they are about to undertake. They know the difficulties they have to encounter, they play because they must cast the dice ; but if it be a question, whethet

* Crime has its degrees, as well as virtue.

they shall set their "all" upon the cast, they consider twice. The code which they study, perpetually reminds them, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther," and a great proportion of them recede before solitary imprisonment, before seclusion for life, before death. It is not without intention, that in this enumeration, I place death in the last place; it is the least of dreads. I will prove it so, and then let any one decide how far our penal laws are properly and fittingly graduated.

Provincial thieves, generally less civilized than those whose education has been carried on in Paris, experience no repugnance in committing murder; they do not confine themselves to self-defence; they attack, and frequently in their expeditions, are not only rash, but also testify a cruel and sanguinary feeling carried to the greatest extent. A thousand barbarous traits, noted down in the judicial journals, can prove what I here assert.

The wisdom of nations has long proclaimed it as a truth, that *wolves do not devour each other*; and that the proverb, though somewhat "musty," may not be belied, thieves have a vast idea of the sentiments of confraternity. They all regard each other as the members of one large family; and although the provincial thieves and the Parisian thieves are usually but little disposed to give each other any assistance, antipathy or prejudice is not carried to any injurious extent. There is always an understanding which is observed and respected in these generalities: "the beast," as would say a philosopher of the Upper Rhine, "has a kindly feeling to the beast of his own race; the brother likes to find a brother." Thus thieves have signs whereby they recognize each other, and a language peculiarly their own. To possess this language, to be initiated into the signs, even when you are not of their profession, is already a claim to their sympathy, and is, at any event, a presumption that they are with *friends*. But these, though more valuable and useful under certain circumstances than those of freemasonry, are not an infallible

guarantee of security, and even if we knew slang as well as a certain young lord whom I abstain from mentioning by his ignoble name, I would advise that no exceeding confidence should be placed in such an acquisition. I will tell a short adventure, which I fancy will prove what I now state: I ask pardon of my reader if I again interrupt the continuous thread of my Memoirs to tell a tale, but it is soon said.

Père Bailly, an old gatekeeper of Sainte Pelagie, had for some months changed his employment for that of keeper of the Dépôt of Mendicity at Saint Denis. Père Bailly was an old boy who liked very well the juice of the grape; but where is the jailer who does not drink, particularly when in good fellowship, and some one else pays for the liquor? For twenty-five years that he was in the prison, Père Bailly had seen many thieves, he knew them almost all, and they all had a *regard* for him, because he behaved kindly towards them; he never took advantage of his station, to worry them as much as possible. Towards those whose purse chinked well, he paid many little attentions, and we know what a jailer's "little attentions" are.

One day the old man had come to Paris to get a small sum in the way of dividend, which he had amassed by economy during long service. It was the *subsidiæ senectutis* (provision for old age), the ant's provender, the wherewithal to procure the morning's whet and the daily quid. Pay day had arrived, and Père Bailly touched the money, *two hundred francs*; he had it, but going and coming he had swallowed a few drams, so that when he returned to his post he was rather gay; that was so much the better, it gave him vigour, and strengthened his legs.

As he was walking along in a very happy mood, delighted at having settled his business so comfortably, under the gate Saint Denis two of his old boarders accosted him, smacking him on the back.

"Ah, good day, Père Bailly!"

"(Turning round) Good day, my lads!"

"Will you have a drop of any thing standing?"

"Standing?—oh, yes, for I have no time to sit down and take it."

They entered the *Deux Boules*.

"A quatern and *three outs*, quick and good."

"Well, my sons, what are you doing?—how go matters, eh? Well, I imagine, for you seem *flush of blunt and in good feather*."

"Why, as for that, we have not much to complain of; since we left the 'Stone Pitcher,' business has been briskish."

"I am glad on't; I like to see you happy; but take care how you get into *Queer-street*, it is an awkward place."

He had emptied his glass, and put out his hand to bid adieu;—

"What, already!—we do not meet so often; and we will have another *go*;—another quatern!"

"No, no; another time; I am in a hurry, and must toddle: and then I am foot-sore, I have run about so much this morning, and I have a good walk yet before me to Saint Tenaille (Saint Denis)."

"A minute more or less," said one of the coves, "that won't hinder you. Let us go and sit down in the tap-room; shall we, Père Bailly?"

"Why, I can't refuse you; come, I will go with you, but tell them to bring in the liquor quickly; one quatern, and no more; I declare I will not have a drop beyond that—I make an oath!"

The quatern was emptied; a third was called for, and entered, and went by the same channel; as did a fourth, fifth, sixth, and Père Bailly did not discover that he had perjured himself. At last he was completely drunk, and kept saying between every draught:—"Well, it's no use talking, I must toddle; it is getting dark, and that is not all. I have two hundred francs in my parcel; and if I should be robbed on the road!"

"What do you fear? there is not a *prig* who would

do so to you; they know you too well to do that, Papa Bailly! he can go free any where, Papa Bailly!"

"I know that; you are right. If they were the lads of the Pantin (Paris), I should be known; but *green prigs*, (country bumpkins,) new at the business, I should in vain make the *arçon**."

"Oh, there's no danger; — your health, Père Bailly!"

"Yours;—ah, now I am not at all tired, but go I must; there is no preventing it. Good night, take care of yourselves."

"Well, well, we are not ambitious to get to your house in *Key* street."

They then helped him to put his stick over his shoulder, at the end of which was the parcel containing the money. Then Père Bailly, who was careful about it, takes his departure.

He reached the faubourg, puffing, stumbling, rolling, balancing, reeling, like a two-penny postman who has business on both sides of the way, and went by sinuosities along, zig-zag. Whilst he was alphabetizing, and making the letters S Z, and all the other crooked ones in the alphabet, and some non-descript and hieroglyphical, the two "*prigs*" were consulting as to the plan they should adopt.

"If you take my advice," said one, "we will take the two hundred *bob* from the old hunks."

"You are right, his chink is as good as another's."

"To be sure, let's follow him."

"Agreed."

In despite of his losing much ground, Père Bailly had already reached the barrier, and they followed close astern. Still overpowered by wine, he sailed against

* The *arçon* is a sign of recognizance, which corresponds with what is called the *grip* in masonic language. It is made by drawing the thumb vertically down the face on one side of the nose to the lips. This is accompanied with a peculiar noise or cracking.

wind and wave: he had too much sail—more sail than ballast; he stumbled, heaved, retrograded, went, crab-fashion, sideways, so much so, that all the coachmen invited him to have a cabriolet.

“Be off with you, fellows,” said the gracious turnkey to this offer, “Père Bailly has a firm foot, and a good eye.”

He soon had reason to be less proud, for on reaching the plain of Vertus, he found himself much embarrassed. Figure to yourself this worthy of a Gaul in the clutches of the two thieves, who instantly seizing his throat, took away his parcel. In vain did he make the sign which should have served him; *du maigre, du maigre*, he bawled out lustily (password which he wished them to understand); he told them his name: *it is the Père Bailly*; but neither to signs, words, nor name, would they give ear. “There is neither fat nor lean *maigre*,” (said the thieves, altering the sound of their voices,) “let go the parcel,” and so saying, they disappeared.

“That is rude, very rude,” murmured the victim, “but they will not carry it to paradise.”

This prophetic menace was very nearly accomplished, but between them and justice there was in the brain of the old man anti-mnemotechnic vapours, and in his hemisphere the thick gloom of profound night. Père Bailly is dead. I resume the thread of my discourse: attention!

It would be impossible to class thieves if they did not class themselves. First, an individual obeys his inclination to plunder: he robs right and left; all that presents itself is fish for his net; on the principle, the proverb, “*Opportunity makes the thief*;” but your *regular prig*, your *downy cracksmán*, makes the opportunity for himself, and it is only in prison that he acquires what he requires to accomplish him as a perfect master of his profession. After having undergone one or two short punishments, for there is no beginner who does not “go to school,” he knows, and is made to know

his own adequacy and aptitude; then, enlightened on his means, he resolves to adopt a decided class and branch, and never leave it but "on compulsion."

Thieves by extraction are, for the most part, Jews or Gipsies; encouraged by their parents, they practise in a measure from their cradle. Scarcely able to use their legs and feet, they accustom their hands to picking and stealing, and all mal-practices. They are young Spartans in whom from "night till morn, from morn till dewy eve," is instilled the admirable system of allowing nothing to escape their clutch. Their vocation is marked out beforehand: they will follow the oblique paths of their race; guides and lessons will not fail them, but they are thieves in every department; and that they may not be ignorant of their peculiar turn of mind and disposition, they try their hands in every line, and as soon as they have discovered that in which they excel, they confine themselves to that, it is their regular and determined pursuit: they have adopted a special business, and do not wander from it.

Since the deluge, there has been but one Voltaire; he was a universal man. From the creation of the world, there has never, perhaps, been found amongst thieves one with an encyclopedic head: with but few exceptions, these are very circumscribed beings, and consequently the least eccentric I have ever known. In fine, each limits himself to collecting the fruits from the branch to which he appertains: when the branch yields but poorly, they glean; when it is entirely barren, they pass on to another, but they do not pluck from two branches at once, and perhaps they would not be gainers if they did, since each branch is a monopoly; and monopolists, whatever be their rank, station, or object, are too jealous of their prerogatives to allow of any one's infringing thereon. Some thieves, however, have two strings to their bow—two stems to their tree—as a certain actress of the Porte Saint Martin would say. She would be right; these privileged gentry were generally married men; the man worked in his depart-

ment, the wife in hers ; or else, to make a comfortable house, they each, with mutual accord, contribute to their mutual labours.

Some of these worthy professors have a degree of pride. The swindler, who is a man of the world, despises the pickpocket ; the pickpocket, who confines himself to the practice of adroitly abstracting a purse or a watch, would conceive himself offended, if it were proposed to him to ransack a room ; and he who makes use of false keys to procure access to an apartment which does not appertain unto himself, considers the highway robber as an infamous and ungentlemanly character*.

On the ladder of crime, whether he be high or low, whether he ascend or descend, man has his vanity—his disdain. Everywhere, in the most abject conditions of life, that his *I MYSELF* may not suffer from vexation and humiliation, he takes care to persuade himself that he is a better man than the one before or the one behind him. That he may inflate himself the more, he reflects, as concerns the exterior world, solely on the very lowest class of it. That, at least, does not put him to shame : he is steeped in mud ; but if he raises his head above the mire—if he sees another deeper in than himself—he thinks he is on plain ground ; that he governs his destiny, regulates his steps, and goes on his way with a rejoicing heart. This is the cause why all the rogues who have not overleaped this mean region of perversity, in which probity exists but as a reminiscence, have always pride in being less criminal than some others ; this is the cause why, above this sphere, it is, on the contrary, who shall make the most parade of their infamy and crime ; this is, in fine, the cause why, in each species, even above that mean region in which disho-

* This feeling is not new, nor is the expression of it original. In our admirable "Beggars' Opera," Peachum tells us, in his opening song, that

"Through all the conditions of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother," &c.—TRANSL.

your is more or less considered, there is not a rogue who does not aspire to be the first of his class,—that is to say, the most skilful, the most successful, or, what amounts to the same thing, the greatest knave.

It is well understood that I here allude only to professed robbers, who are the regular Cossacks of our civilization. As to the countryman who steals a truss of hay, the cobbler who makes false money, the notary who lends himself to a false signature, or writes a will under the dictation of a corpse—they are irregular Cossacks, from pure chance, who cannot be classed. It is the same with regard to isolated authors of all deeds to which they are urged by the turmoil of passion,—hatred, anger, jealousy, love, avarice, and the fury of frantic depravity. Assassins by profession are the only ones whom I have given myself the trouble to describe in my categories: but first, I will “show up” those whose manners, habits, and bearing are more gentle. The session commences—show in the *Cambrioleur*.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE CAMBRIOLEUR.

The costume of the city—The habitual quid—Houses without a porter—Curiosity of the lodgers—The midwives' messengers—Waistcoats and cravats—The trophy of love—Baskets and scuttles—New faces—Tremble for Sunday—Good advice—Take a stick—Houses with a porter—Pay your watchmen—*Cambrioleurs à la flan*—The fire-work and the nosegay—The *caroubleur*—A short list of suspicious gentry—Spies—The *nourrisseurs*—Conceal the openings—Perfidious neighbours—Oh! my fine fellow, you are known in spite of your handsome mask.

CAMBRIOLEURS are plunderers of rooms either by force or with false keys. In the city, that is to say, out of their habitual profession, it is not difficult to recognize them. They are, for the greater part, young men, the eldest of whom are not thirty years of age: from eighteen to thirty is the age of a cambrioleur. They are ordinarily well-dressed. But be their costume what it may, if they have donned waist-coat, great-coat, or close-coat, they cannot divest themselves of a plebeian air; and at the first glance it may be decided that they are not gentlemen. They generally have dirty hands; and the presence of an enormous quid of tobacco, which they roll about in the mouth incessantly, distorts their features in a very peculiar manner. They seldom carry a stick or cane, still more unfrequently do they wear gloves, although they sometimes have them.

The cambrioleurs do not attempt to clear out a room before they are in some way acquainted with the habits of the person who occupies it. They must discover when he is absent, and if there be adequate booty. Those houses which have no porters are most favourable to their enterprises; when they contemplate a stroke they go three or four together, who enter and go up stairs successively. One knocks at the door, to ascertain whether any one be within. If no answer be given, it is a good sign, and they commence opera-

tions; and to be guarded against a surprise whilst they are breaking the lock or using the centre-bit, one of the gang stations himself on the upper, and another on the lower staircase.

Whilst they are going on with the opening it may happen that the tenant goes up or down stairs, and if he be inquisitive enough to inquire what these strangers want, he is told that they are going to the *lieu d'aisance*, or asked for some name which they know is an unknown one; sometimes they want a washerwoman, a nurse, a shoemaker, or a midwife newly established. We must notice in this case, the questioned thief stammers rather than speaks; that he avoids looking in the face of the interrogator, and that, in haste to give him space to pass by, he squeezes himself against the wall with his back to the staircase.

A very strange peculiarity is, that when a cambrioleur of renown adopts a style of cravat and waistcoat, all the confraternity take him for their "mould of fashion," as regards these two vestments; the prevailing colours, are red, yellow, &c.

In 1814, I apprehended a band of twenty-two thieves, twenty of whom had waistcoats of the same cut and material; they seemed cut from the same stuff, and made by the same hand. In general, thieves are like prostitutes, there is always a something about them which betrays their profession: they are fond of a medley of fine colours, and whatever care they take to ape people of respectability or fashion, the most distinguished air and demeanour they can assume is that of Sunday-dressed mechanics. It is to no purpose that they have their ears pierced, small rings, and a hair chain decked with gold ornaments, and other gewgaws pressed into the service; the chain is too obtrusively placed on the waistcoat; it is always a trophy of love, and they make too much parade of it! a velvet hat, with the pile half standing, half lying down, has much value in their eyes: I am here speaking only of thieves who are faithful to the traditions of their trade; as to those

who discard it, we can guess at them by manners in which there is something constrained which is not to be found in an honest man. This results from the timidity of guilt; it is the awkwardness of an apprehension of betraying themselves; they see that they are observed, and dread to be so; if they speak, there is in their conversation a stiffness, a shyness, an assumption of language, frequently comic, as well from the quantity of false concords, as from *malapropic* burlesque of words of which they do not know the meaning; they do not converse; they chatter, incessantly shifting the topic, going on at random, diverging from the subject at every moment, profiting by every opportunity of changing ground, and all chances of turning the theme of colloquy.

Some cambrioleurs are accompanied on their enterprises by women, who carry panniers and baskets like washerwomen, in which they put the stolen property. The appearance of a woman descending a staircase, or going through a passage in such guise, is a circumstance which excites no curiosity or suspicion, particularly if we see the female for the first time. The frequent entrances and exits of individuals whom we are in the habit of seeing in a particular place, denote always bad designs.

The most productive days for cambrioleurs are those fine Sundays in summer, during which the laborious population of Paris go abroad without the barriers, to taste the pleasures of the country. The cambrioleurs may be reduced to a nonplus as soon as we wish. Let but the persons who have no porters at their house-door leave some one in the room when they go out; let the tenants, in fact, renounce the fatal system of isolation, which is favourable only to malefactors; let them consider themselves as co-interested, and let the neighbour watch for his neighbour; let every stranger that enters, goes out, goes up stairs or down, be suspected, compelled to give some account of himself, and if he testify the least hesitation, let him be detained

until he have given all necessary certainty that no robbery has been committed. Let each tenant, in whom the appearance of the unknown person had inspired distrust, warn all the other lodgers forthwith that they may be on their guard; let the person at whose apartment the suspicious he, she, or they has or have knocked to ask for some name unknown, not content himself with shutting his door in a rage, but follow the inquirer, and not lose sight of him until he knows that he has left the premises: let the inquirer, if he have introduced himself without having knocked or rung the bell, or without having waited until it was opened to him, be considered as an evil designing person and treated as such; in this case the use of a stick is very much to the purpose—employ it effectually.

Would you rout out and root out the *cambricoleurs*?—always have the key of your apartment in a safe place, never leave it in the door within side or without. Are you going out?—do not hang it up any where; lend it to no one on any account, not even to *stop a bleeding at the nose**. If you are compelled to be from home some time, think of some place of concealment, where you can hide your choicest valuables; the place most exposed is frequently that which is not searched. I would most willingly put my reader in the safe way, but I fear that I may give indications to the thieves. It is prudent not to have always the same hiding-place.

If you have taken the precautions I advise, you can do nothing better than leave all your keys about on your tables. If thieves come, you will save them the trouble of using violence and putting you to considerable expense. If there be secret drawers to your secretary, or wardrobes, leave them open, otherwise you will be exposed to the ravages of *Monseigneur*, the powerful crow-bar, which no locks can resist. Open, open, but hide, hide, that is the real secret of not being robbed.

Houses with porters would be completely protected

* *Vide* vol. i. page 199, et seq.—TRANSL.

from the species of robbery which I am describing, it the porters were more employed in fulfilling their duties than levying a tax on persons who will fee them; but these porters are a terrible set. In the first place they are provided with a vast deal of useless curiosity which is often dangerous; the trumpets of all slanders and lies; great improvisatores, cacklers, and blabs, they only concern themselves about circumstances true or false which may turn to profit their mania for blackening characters. Thus when we wish to deceive their vigilance it is very easy to get or send them away from their lodge. I have frequently thought of a means of rendering porters exclusively attentive to their duties, and this means I believe I have discovered. It is, in the first place, to pay them at a more liberal rate than is now used; then to expect from them a security, which, except by climbing, and one or two other ways, should be answerable for the robbery committed in the houses of which they were the guardians.

I return to the *cambricoleurs*, of whom there are two very distinct varieties; the first is the *cambricoleurs à la flan* (robbers of apartments by chance), who introduce themselves into rooms without any previous plan or arrangement. These improvisatores are those who go knocking from door to door; they are sure of nothing; when there is spoil they take it; when there is none the thief loses his time and chance.

The trade of *cambricoleur à la flan* is very hazardous without being lucrative: three-fourths of the time the play does not pay for the candles. They live at the expense of the Sunday holiday-makers, feast-goers, and diners-out by profession; and whilst to repay himself for the labour of the week, the honest hard-working artificer, surrounded by his little family, goes to see the sight on the water, the distribution of provisions, fireworks, betakes himself to the admirable representation of the "Galley Slave," the "False Key," the "Thieving Magpie," whilst the play seems to him admirable, or the thieves excite his laughter, at his house brigands mo-

substantial are doing a bit of business, and after the pleasures of the day, it is at home that he finds the real thing has been acted.

The second variety of cambrioleurs is that of *carou-bleurs* : they adventure nothing. They procure information from the servants, the room-cleaners, bed-makers, painters, paper-hangers, carpet-makers ; and learning perfectly the places which can be of use to them, they go straight to the point. Furnished as they are with the most accurate information, and most precise indications, they are never deceived. The greater portion of their time they use false keys only, which they make from the impressions they procure from the spies their accomplices.

The third variety is that of *nourisseurs*, so called because they nurse or *nourish their affairs*. To nourish an affair is to have it in perspective, and await the moment for perpetration. The *nourisseurs* premeditate their enterprises long beforehand, and do not attempt to gather the pear until it be fully ripe. When they have an affair in view which they themselves have arranged, or which has been pointed out to them, they proceed with certainty that they are not entering on a nullity. If they propose to operate on a man whose property is in the funds, they learn the period at which he receives his dividend. Do they determine on making a descent on a retail shopkeeper ; they choose as the time of paying him and his cash a visit the end of the month or the first days in January. Under any circumstances they have positive information, at least as far as concerns their modes of getting access.

The *nourisseurs* are generally men of mature age ; their appearance, without being precisely elegant, yet announces ease. They are insinuating and skilful in contriving to procure access to those houses where they wish to make a capture. When there are many occupants, they form an acquaintance with a shoemaker, a washerwoman, or some mechanic near, at whose abode they present themselves and hold conversations. The

workman doubts nothing ; the pretence of seeing him is the cause of the frequent comings and goings.

There are nourrisseurs who, having contemplated a robbery in a house, hire an apartment there. Then they are in no hurry ; and if a fine opportunity should present itself, they do not attempt any thing before they have acquired in their new neighbourhood the consideration necessary to quell all suspicion. They assume vast condescension and politeness ; they have nothing on credit ; they go to market cash in hand ; if there be any noise, it is never in their apartment ; they come home and go to bed early ; their conduct is extremely regular ; at a pinch they affect great devotion ; the mother and children, if there be any, go to mass. In every country devotion is employed as a mask, but at Paris, more than any where else, it frequently conceals evil designs.

Many months pass away ; at length comes the moment when reputation is established ; the nourrisseur has had leisure to take all his measures ; he commences operations, and suddenly one day it is found that one of the lodgers, or perhaps the landlord himself, has been plundered of his most valuable property. The rumour is great, every body is indignant at it, every one is astonished : the thief must have known the persons. The cambrioleur is the first to say so. As he has not failed to send away the stolen goods, and is quite certain that they will not be found, he advises, he invites a general search. The next quarter he moves his quarters, and every body is sorry, he was such a nice man !

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The rendezvous—Two notorious thieves—The placard—Speaking too much is injurious—The danger of a local memory—A juridical mistake—M. Delaveau and M. de Belleyne, or the evil genius and the good genius—Horrible consequences—One reputation is as good as another—There is a mean path.

To judge by the multitude of robberies, the perpetrators of which cannot be detected, we are at first tempted to think that the number of haunts of the kind we have spoken of in the preceding chapter is very considerable, and besides that, it is a difficult matter to convict them. However, he who has not discovered it to-day may to-morrow, for sooner or later impunity has its termination. I could quote a thousand cases to prove it, but confine myself to the following :—

M. Tardif, a notary at the corner of Rue de la Vieille Draperie, was for a long time the point of action of a band of robbers, amongst whom were the celebrated cambrioleurs Baudry and Robé. They, passing one morning before a notary's, saw a bill stuck up, which on perusal they found to be notice of a room to let; it suited them, but was not in proper trim. A new paper was indispensable, and the wainscot wanted painting, and to whom should they confide the care of this necessary embellishment! a young painter had been working in the apartments of the notary, and they sent for him, and whilst he was pasting the paper and ornamenting the wainscot, they talk with him. Unfortunately he possessed a memory for localities, and there was not at M. Tardif's a single arrangement that he did not fully remember, not a chink or corner escaped him, not a piece of furniture of which he could not accurately point out the use and situation in the apartment. Without thinking further of it, he supplied all the requisite information. Six weeks afterwards M. Tardif

was robbed: who were the guilty perpetrators? no one knows anything about it, and can scarcely form a conjecture, but people are never betrayed but by some one concerned about them. One of the thieves, after having had his share of the plunder, sold his accomplices. They were all apprehended and condemned. They deserved their fate, and the sentence passed against them would only have been just, if it had not included the young painter, whose indiscretion was at the utmost only imprudence. He received first fourteen years in irons, which he underwent in the *bagne* at Brest.

Afterwards liberated, this man, whom I shall not name, although the world must declare him innocent, lives now in Paris. Head of a prosperous establishment, excellent citizen, husband, and father, he lives happily; and yet it very nearly happened, that the injustice, of which he was the victim, was extended through the effect of a surveillance contrary to the spirit of the code under the control of which he was sentenced. This surveillance I received the command to put into execution, but I did not lend my aid to an abuse of power, which, under my successor, has nearly arrived at its accomplishment. An arbitrary power so revolting may suit M. Delaveau, to whom it was so agreeable to act up to the extremest severity of the laws. Under M. de Belleyne, whose accession to the prefecture has produced so much good, it deserved to be proscribed, and it has been. Surveillance, I shall take every opportunity of saying, is a most atrocious hardship, because a perpetual mark of infamy. Suppose the liberated prisoner here mentioned had not resolved to free himself from it, what would have been the result? At first he would have been compelled to come and present himself periodically at my office, then to have made his appearance once a month at the commissary of police of his quarter who is his neighbour. From that, persons, who would never have believed him to be an old galley slave, would have thought

nim a spy in actual work; one character is as good as the other. Disgraced, despised, abandoned by all the world, he would have been reduced to die of hunger, or devote himself to crime for a subsistence. Such are, for a condemned man, innocent or guilty, the frightful consequences of a state of surveillance; they are inevitable: I mistake—between hunger and the scaffold there is a mean path—SUICIDE.

CHAPTER XLIX.

I arrive from Brest—The good woman—Pity is not love—My first meal—The father-in-law—The *arlequin* and the *persillade*—Suppers in the Rue Grenétat—My *cambricoleuse*—I ally myself to *clean out* a pawnbroker—Annette appears in the horizon—Great discomfiture—I fall sick—A theft to pay the apothecary—Henriette pays for the broken pots—I see her again—A fugitive—He gets the assistance of the guard to carry off the treasure of the police—Unjust suspicions—The fugitive is betrayed—Memorable words—A colossal reputation—the chef-d'œuvre of the kind—Hang yourself, brave Crillon!—Go to England and they will hang you.

THE mistress of a thief named *Charpentier*, but better known by two nicknames, *La tache de vin*, and the *Tru-maux*, had been betrayed with him, as guilty of robberies by the help of false keys. Although her lover, of whom she was the accomplice, had been sentenced to the galleys, she, for want of proof, was acquitted. Henriette, for that was her name, was connected with Rosalie *Dubost*, and no sooner had she recovered her liberty, than she associated with her to commit fresh robberies in chambers. But many declarations made to the police, soon attracted its attention to the two friends. Henriette lived in the Rue Grand Hurleur. I received a command to watch her, and having arranged my method of making acquaintance with her I met her one day at the door of her house, and thus accosted her.

“Ah, stop,” said I; “well met, nothing could be better: I was going to meet you.”

"But I do not know you."

"Do you not remember that I have seen you with Charpentier at the *Ile d'Amour*?"

"Possibly."

"Well! I have just arrived from Brest, your man sends remembrances; he would willingly have joined you, but the poor devil is amongst the suspected, and it is more difficult to escape than ever."

"Ah mordié! I remember you well now: I perfectly recollect that we were together at La Chapelle at Duchesne's when we were having a *lark* with our friends."

After this recognition, which was all I wished, I asked Henriette if she had any *job in view*. She promised me marvels and miracles; and to prove to me how desirous she was of being useful to me, she pressed me with a great earnestness to instal myself at her house. The offer of partaking her domicile was made so heartily that I could not but accept it. Henriette lodged in a small room, the whole furniture of which consisted of one chair and a flock bed, with a woollen mattress, the appearance of which did not invite one to repose. She instantly led me to this retreat.

"Sit down," she said, "I shall not be out long: if any person knocks, do not answer."

In fact, she had not long been absent, when I saw her enter, carrying a bottle in one hand, and in the other two pieces of bacon and a loaf. It was but a sorry repast that she offered, but no matter, I pretended to eat with appetite. The meal ended, she told me that she was going to see her man's father, and begged me to sleep until she returned. As it was necessary to appear in want of sleep, I cast myself on the bed, which was so hard that it appeared like a sack of nails.

Two hours afterwards, the father Charpentier arrived, who embraced me, wept, and spoke of his boy.

"When shall I see him again?" said he, and his tears flowed afresh.

But how deep soever grief may be, it is necessary

sometimes to dry up our tears ; the father Charpentier dried up his, and proposed that I should go and sup with him at the *Sauvage*, at the barrier de la Vilette. "I will go and get some cash," said he, "and we will start."

But people have not always at hand the money they want. Father Charpentier, who, doubtless, had been mistaken in his hopes, did not return till evening, when he brought the moderate sum of three francs fifty centimes, and an *arlequin**, which he had purchased as he came along in the Rue Saint-Jean. It was in a handkerchief begrimed with snuff that he had placed this disgusting gallimaufry, and laying it at the foot of the bed, he said to Henriette, "Here, my girl, take it, cash is low to-day, we will not go to the barrier, but go and get us two quarts of wine at sixteen sous, a loaf, two sous worth of oil, ditto vinegar, to make a *persillade* (at the same time looking at the *arlequin* with the eyes of a sensualist): there are some famous cuts of beef there," he observed ; "come run, my lass, and return quickly."

Henriette was active, and did not keep us waiting. The *vinaigrette* was soon ready, and I pretended to lick my fingers at the sight of it. When we return from *there*, we must not be hard to please ; so whilst we were dispatching it, the father said to me :

"Well, my lad, if thou hadst had such at the *pré* (bagne), every day would have been a Sunday with thee."

With cocks of the same feather, a quarter of an hour produces close intimacy. Before we opened the second bottle, I was with Henriette and her father-in-law, as if we had not been separated for ten years.

* They call *arlequins* small lumps of mixed meats, which they sell in the market for the cats, dogs, and poor. They are the relics collected from the plates of the rich, and from the restaurateurs.

The man was an old scoundrel, a fellow for any thing, had he still been capable of doing. I agreed with him that he should put me on terms with some friends, and the next day he brought me one *Martinot*, called the *Estomac de Poulet*. He came to the point with me, and talked of a little affair which would help to start me again.

"Ah!" said I, "I will not expose myself for such trifling booty: I think this is not worth the risk."

"In that case," replied Martinot, "I have what will suit you, but it will not be ripe for a few days; the keys are not made; as soon as we have them, you shall join us, you may rely on it."

I thanked Martinot, and he brought to me three other "prigs" who were to work with us. I began to be somewhat fearful, lest I might be brought in contact with some one who would disconcert my projects, and I took care not to go out with my new party. I remained with Henriette during the greater part of the day, and in the evening we went together to the corner of the Rue Grenétat, to a vintner's, where we spent thirty sous, which she had earned at glove making.

Annette could serve me in this intrigue in which I had embarked, and I resolved to give her a part to play, if need might be. I went secretly to tell her, and in the evening, when we entered the cabaret, we saw seated alone, at a table, a female who was just about to sup. It was Annette. I looked at her with a kind of curiosity. She did the same. I asked Henriette if she knew the person who examined us so attentively.

"I know nothing of her," she replied.

"It is at me then she is looking: I have some idea of having seen her somewhere, but do not remember where.

That I might ascertain the point, I accosted the stranger with "Pardon me, madame, but I think I have the pleasure of knowing you."

"Really, sir, I was thinking who you could be. That said I to myself is a face I have seen somewhere. Have you ever lived at Rouen?"

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "is it you, Josephine?—and your man, dear Romain?"

"Alas!" said she, sobbing, "he is *sick* at *Canelle*," (in confinement at Caen).

"How long?"

"Three months, and I am afraid he will not soon get away; he has a *high fear* (imprisoned on a serious affair); and you are *well* (free), it appears?"

"Yes, well; but who knows how soon I may fall sick again?"

"Let us hope not."

Henriette was enchanted at the amiable appearance of the lady, and was desirous of her company. At last we all agreed so well, that we resolved to be henceforward like the fingers on a hand, like three heads in one cap, or three bodies in one shirt. The pretended Josephine, at the conclusion of an affecting tale which drew tears from Henriette, told us that she was lodging in a furnished house in the Rue Guerin, Boisseau. After we had exchanged addresses, she said to me, "Ah! now hear me. You know that once you obliged my lad with a twenty franc piece, and it is but just that I should now return it to you."

I made some difficulty about accepting the twenty francs, but at length consented; and Henriette, whom this proceeding touched more than even the tale she had heard, entered into a long conversation with the honest moiety of my friend; the conversation turned on myself.

"Such as you see him," said the ci-devant spouse of Charpentier, pointing to me, "I would not exchange him for another, though he were ten times handsomer. He is my poor rabbit: we have been together these ten years, and, would you believe it, we have never had the slightest word?"

Annette played her portion of this comedy to admiration. Every evening she was punctual to the rendezvous, and we supped together. At length the moment arrived when we were to perpetrate the robbery

in which I was to join. All was ready. Martinot and his friends were prepared. It was the room of a money-vender which they proposed to empty. They told me the spot, in the Rue Montorgueil, and the very house they had fixed on to make their entrance. I gave Annette the requisite instructions, that she might warn the police; and that I might be sure they attempted nothing without me, I neither quitted them nor my dear Henriette.

We started on the expedition. Martinot went up, opened the door, and came down again.

"We have nothing to do but to enter," said he; and whilst he and I remained on the look out, his comrades ran up to get the booty for themselves and us, at the expense of the usurer. But the agents were at their heels; I saw them, and at the moment determined to do something which would distract Martinot's attention, and make him turn his head another way.

The three thieves, surprised whilst they were breaking open the locks, cried out, and we took to our heels. Martinot having carried off the keys, his companions thus escaped the punishment of fetters, for it was probable, according to their custom, they would allege they had found the door open; it was necessary therefore to have Martinot apprehended with the keys on him, as well as to establish his connexion with the criminals they had already apprehended. It was to effect this that Annette was of the greatest use to me. Martinot was seized with all the necessary proofs for his conviction, without Henriette's conceiving the slightest suspicion; she only saw that I was very happy, and that gave me an additional title to her love. When the sentiment with which I inspired her was at its highest, I had to put it to the test by an illness at command. I could not recover my health but by the purchase of medicines, the price of which was not proportioned to our pecuniary means. Henriette insisted on procuring them, and, "on hospitable thoughts intent," premeditated a little bit of priggery, *à la cambrioleuse*, which she intrusted to me. Rosalie

Dubost was to aid her; the robbery was attempted, and the execution of it was commenced. But I had quenched the match. Henriette and her friend underwent the consequences of being caught in the very fact, and were both sentenced to ten years of hard labour. At the expiry of her sentence, Henriette came to my house *en surveillance*; she might with justice have reproached me, but never did so.

Henriette, Rosalie Dubost, and Martinot were poor *cambrioneurs*, but there are of this class thieves of incredible effrontery; that of one Beaumont almost surpasses belief. Escaped from the *bagne* at Rochefort, where he was sentenced to pass twelve years of his life, he came to Paris, and scarcely had he arrived there, where he had already practised, when, by way of getting his hand in, he committed several trifling robberies, and when by these preliminary steps he had proceeded to exploits more worthy of his ancient renown, he conceived the project of stealing a treasure. No one will imagine that this treasure was that of the *Bureau Central* (Central Office), now the Prefecture of Police!! It was already pretty difficult to procure impressions of the keys, but he achieved this first difficulty, and soon had in his possession all the means of effecting an opening; but to open was nothing, it was necessary to open without being perceived, to introduce himself without fear of being disturbed, to work without witnesses, and go out again freely. Beaumont, who had calculated all the difficulties that opposed him, was not dismayed. He had remarked that the private room of the chief officer, M. Henri, was nigh to the spot where he proposed to effect his entrance; he espied the propitious moment, and wished sincerely that some circumstance would call away so dangerous a neighbour for some time, and chance was subservient to his wishes.

One morning, M. Henri was obliged to go out. Beaumont, sure that he would not return that day, ran to his house, put on a black coat, and in that costume, which, in those days, always announced a magistrate,

or public functionary, presented himself at the entrance of the *Bureau Central*. The officer to whom he addressed himself supposed, of course, that he was at least a commissary. On the invitation of Beaumont, he gave him a soldier, whom he placed as sentinel at the entrance to the narrow passage which leads to the *depôt*, and commanded not to allow any person to pass. No better expedient could be found for preventing surprise. Thus Beaumont, in the midst of a crowd of valuable objects, could, at his leisure, and in perfect security, choose what best pleased him: watches, jewels, diamonds, precious stones, &c. He chose those which he deemed most valuable, most portable, and as soon as he had made his selection, he dismissed the sentinel, and disappeared.

This robbery could not be long concealed, and the following day it was discovered. Had thunder fallen on the police, they would have been less astonished than at this event. To penetrate to the very sanctuary!—the holy of holies! The fact appeared so very extraordinary, that it was doubted. Yet it was evident that a robbery had taken place, and to whom was it to be attributed? All the suspicions fell on the clerks, sometimes on one, sometimes on another, when Beaumont, betrayed by a friend, was apprehended, and sentenced a second time.

The robbery he had committed might be estimated at some hundred thousand francs, the greater part of which were found on him.

“There was wherewithal,” he said, “to become an honest man; I should have become so; it is so easy when rich! yet how many rich men are only scoundrels!”

These words were the only ones he uttered, when he was apprehended. This surprising thief was conducted to Brest; where, after half a dozen escapes, which only served to make his subsequent confinement more rigorous, he died in a frightful state of exhaustion.

Beaumont enjoyed amongst his confraternity a

colossal reputation ; and even now, when a rogue boasts of his lofty exploits—"Hold your tongue," they say, "you are not worthy to untie the shoe-strings of Beaumont !"

In effect, to have robbed the police was the height of address. Is not a robbery of this nature the *chef-d'œuvre* of its kind, and can it do otherwise than make its perpetrator a hero in the eyes of his admirers? Who should dare to compare with him? Beaumont had robbed the police!!! Hang yourself, brave Crillon! hang yourself, Coignard! hang yourself, Pertruisard! hang yourself, Callet!—to him, you are but of Saint-Jean. What is it to have robbed states of service? to have carried off the treasure of the army of the Rhine? to have carried off the military chest?—Beaumont had robbed the police! Hang yourselves!—or go to England, they will hang you there.

CHAPTER L.

Capdeville, or Monsieur Proteus—The false farmer-general—Simplicity of M. Seguin—"Hay in the boots"—The widow well guarded—Perseverance—Monsieur *Fierval*—A walk—The lover of nature—The fortunate country!—The universal panacea—The fountain of jouvence—One pinch; two pinches: how to make use of them—Miraculous virtues of the *toute-bonne*—Great herborization—"Culling of simples"—I shall be Rosière—The Circé of Saint Germain—Stop thief! murder! guard! fire!—A hole—A great discovery—Disappointment of a broker—The candid avowal—Look to your arm-chairs.

ONE of the most adroit cambrioleurs was *Le petit Godet*, alias the *Marquis*, alias *Durand*, alias *Capdeville*; and it would be an endless undertaking were I to recapitulate here all the names and all the forms he has assumed in the course of his long career. He was by turns, merchant, privateer, emigrant, *rentier**, &c. &c. After having played one of the most prominent characters in the bands that so long infested the south of France, he had betaken himself for refuge to Rouen, where, in consequence of a robbery attributed to him, he was recognized, and sentenced to the galleys for life. It was the seventh or eighth time he had been condemned.

Capdeville had, as his principal henchmen, three other thieves, *Delstone*, *Fiancette*, and *Colonge*, whose names deserve to be cited in the general history of arrant knaves.

He had embarked very young in his profession; and, nearly sixty, he still carried it on. He was a respectable looking man: large stomach, good face, experience of the world; nothing failed him that could inspire confidence at first sight. He had, moreover, considerable tact; and knew well the power of habit.

* A person possessing an income arising from the *rentes* or funds.

To say that his appearance was that of a farmer-general or ex-contractor, I ought not to have seen the illustrious M. Seguin in all the simplicity of his costume. That I may lead no person into error, I renounce the comparison, and imagine that I shall be understood when I have related that this crafty rogue had all the satisfactory appearance of those particular, elderly worthies, whose neat and precise dress leads us to believe that they have made the most of their opportunities,—*qu'ils ont du foin dans leurs bottes*.

Few cambrioleurs were more enterprising, or endowed with greater perseverance. One day the idea occurred to him of robbing a rich widow, who lived at Saint Germain-en-Laye, Rue du *Pateau Juré*. He first explored the approaches of the place, and in vain attempted to get access. He excelled in making false keys; but false keys are not chance work, and he could not by any mode procure the shadow of the impression of the keys. Two months elapsed in fruitless attempts; any other man but Capdeville would have abandoned in despair an enterprise which presented so many apparently insurmountable difficulties; but Capdeville had said, "I will succeed," and he would not have it said that he lied. A house contiguous to that of the widow was occupied by a lodger; he contrived to get him sent away, and soon installed himself in his place.

Monsieur *Fierval* was the new neighbour of the widow. By Jove! say the people in the vicinity, he is not like his predecessor; he has magnificent furniture; and it is easy to see that he is somebody. He had dwelt there about three weeks, when his lady neighbour, who had not taken the air for a long time, determined on taking a walk, and went into the park, accompanied by Marie, her faithful servant. Just as she had terminated this pastoral excursion, she was met by a stranger in the attire of a disciple of Linnæus and Tournefort, who accosted her, holding in one hand his hat, in the other a plant.

"You see, madam, before you a lover of nature, of that lovely nature with which all noble and tender souls have been captivated; botany, madam, botany is my passion!—it was also that of the sensible Jean Jacques; of the virtuous Bernardin Saint Pierre. After the example of those great philosophers, I 'cull simples;' and if I do not deceive myself, I shall be fortunate enough to meet with some in this province extremely valuable. Ah, madam, it would be indeed desirable for the benefit of humanity that all the world knew the virtues of this. Do you know this herb?"

"Really, sir, it is not very rare in the environs; but I confess my ignorance of it: I neither know its name nor its qualities."

"It is not very rare, do you say? Oh fortunate country! It is really not scarce? Would you be so very obliging as to tell me the places where it grows in the greatest plenty?"

"Willingly, sir; but be so kind as to tell me the use of this herb?"

"Its use, madam! For every thing—it is a real treasure, an universal panacea. With this herb there is no occasion to make medicines: taken as a decoction, the root purifies the mass of the blood, drives away evil humours, promotes circulation, dissipates melancholy, gives suppleness to the limbs, play to the muscles, and cures all complaints to a hundred years old. As an infusion, the stalk performs wonders: a handful in a bath, and continue the use of it, you will have discovered the fountain of jouvence; the leaf on a wound cicatrizes it instantly."

"And its flower?"

"Ah, its flower! Here, madam, is reason to bless Providence, if ladies but knew its powers: it is a flower of virginity, and with it there are no widows."

"It would make me find a husband?"

"Better than that, madam; it would make you as though you never had one: one pinch, two pinches, three pinches, and the thing is done."

"What a wonderful flower!"

"You have reason to call it so: but in addition, it is possible to make a philtre of it of a most powerful nature against indifference in the matter of marriage."

"You are joking, sir?"

"No, madam; Heaven preserve me from so doing! A lotion on the one hand, a beverage: the whole secret consists in the mode of preparation, and the manner of using it."

"Would it be an improper or rude request to ask you for the receipt?"

"Not at all, madam: ask, and I will with pleasure tell you all you desire to know."

"Ah! first tell me the name of this valuable simple."

"The name, madam, is simply the *toute-bonne*, which we call also the *bonne à tout*."

"Marie, the *bonne à tout*, do you hear? You must remember it—the *bonne à tout*. If we conduct this gentleman to the further end of the park, I think it grows there in abundance."

"If it were not so far, I would take you where it grows in abundance—there are quantities, large quantities of it. It is like dog grass: I have sometimes gathered large armfuls. See how little one knows: it is that perhaps which rabbits—— But, sir, perhaps you would not like to go so far?"

"I would go to the end of the world, only that I am fearful of abusing your complaisance."

"Oh! do not fear that, sir,—do not fear. I shall be sufficiently paid, since you will consent to go."

"Oh yes! that is right. I did not think——"

Marie guided the culler of simples; who on the road explained to the lady how to make infusions, decoctions, applications, lotions, and the sublime matrimonial essence. At length they reached the spot: never did botanist behold in such quantities the plant whose merits he had so greatly expatiated upon. He was transported with joy, enthusiasm, pleasure; and when he had been in extasies for a pretty considerable time,

he began to gather it. The lady made her collection too, of which Marie took charge. They herborized to such an extreme, that in less than twenty minutes the poor girl bent under her burden, but did not complain. She proposed to herself even to return then; for Marie had not lost a word of the pharmaceutical lesson, and was not less desirous of trying its virtues than her mistress: Deceived by two soldiers, one after the other, she was looking out for a third; and then they talked of having a *rosière* at the next fête of the patron saint, and the choice might fall on her. Under these circumstances, if Marie is not crowned, she might certainly, without blushing, have got her hat ready, and have formed the happiness of her lover by a marriage without precedents. This hope gave her strength. Madame exerts herself amazingly, and the herborization is quickly terminated; then the botanist and the widow separated, after having exchanged compliments. The botanist flew away with new discoveries; and the Circé of Saint Germain-en-Laye regained her home with her servant,—proud of bearing, for the first time, a bundle of hay full of beauty, health, wisdom, charms, enchantments, &c.

They reached the house. So long a walk had created an appetite in the lady.

“Quick, quick, Marie, bring in the tray and let us have dinner.”

“But, madam, there is nothing ready.”

“Never mind, we will eat some cold meat. Bring the cold chickens of yesterday, and fry me a whiting or two.”

Marie, who was no less hungry than her mistress hastened to execute her orders.

“*Ah! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*”

“Marie, do not cry out in that way: you quite startle me.”

“Ah, madame!”

“What ails you, Marie? Have you broken your leg?”

“The plate——”

"Well, the plate."

"We have been robbed."

"You are mad."

"I swear it."

"Hold your tongue, you careless girl. When washing your silver, you left a spoon behind you in the water. If I come, I will be bound I will lay my hand upon it."

"Ah, madam! they have all been taken."

"What say you?"

"Can you believe it? They have all been carried off!"

"All carried off! Are you sure of it—all carried off? You are crazy, my poor Marie!"

On saying this, the widow rose angrily, ran to the drawer, and pushing Marie away somewhat roughly—

"Get away, you foolish thing. Good heaven! what a misfortune! Oh, the wretches! oh, the villains! oh, the infamous creatures! But stir yourself, Marie! stir yourself! you stand there like a mummy. So she won't move, the stupid wench! what! does nothing but milk run in your veins?"

"Yes, madam, but what would you have me do?"

"This is one of your stupid doings. I told you fifty times to shut the door, and whilst you just turned your back they entered at the dining room. That is the way. On our return the safety-bolt was not as when we left it. As for me, I will undertake that no one shall ever rob me. It should never be my fault. When I go out or when I come in, my keys never leave my side; but you!—Six thousand francs value of plate!—a pretty day's work you have made of it. I cannot think what has come to you. There, get out of my sight, get out of my sight, you dolt, when I tell you."

Marie, thunderstruck, went into the next apartment, but returned in an instant, crying out—"Good heavens! your room has been forced, the secretary is broken open, and every thing is topsy turvy."

The widow hastened to see if Marie had not deceived

her; the catastrophe was but too cruel; with one glance she saw its full extent, and then groaned out,—“The monsters,—I am ruined!” and fainted on the ground.

Marie ran to a window, and shrieked out for assistance—“Thieves! murder! guard! fire!” Such were the alarming words which resounded through the Rue de Pateau. The inhabitants, the gendarmes, the commissary, flocked to the house: from the ground-floor to the garret, they made a strict search, but found no person. Then one of the assistants proposed to descend to the cellar,—“To the cellar, to the cellar,” was unanimously echoed.

They lighted a candle, and, whilst Marie was administering to her mistress, who had recovered her senses, the commissary, preceded by the men with the lights, made the projected descent.

They entered the first cellar, nothing; the second, nothing yet; the third, which was contiguous to that of the neighbour, on the ground were some fragments of plaster. They advanced, and in the party-wall they saw—an opening large enough for the passage of a man. This explained the whole. Two hours before they had observed a carriage at the door of the stout gentleman from Paris—him they designated Capdeville; who, it was stated, had got into it after having deposited therein a portmanteau, which appeared very heavy. This portmanteau contained the gold, silver, jewels, and plate of the widow, amounting in value to a considerable sum. Capdeville did not make his appearance again, and it was not possible to overtake him. Only a few days after, a person appeared to claim the furniture which decorated his apartment. Who made this claim? An agent of Capdeville? No, the broker who had sold to him on credit. They told him the whole story of the *toute bonne*.

The widow, whom he went to see, showed him her bundle of hay.

“Ah!” said he, looking at the testimony of a cruel mystification, “I have only one regret.”

“What is that?”

“It is, that I did not put four times as much more in his arm-chairs: but they may open the cushions, and if they find a single hair——”

From this regret springs a great truth;—that all cul-
lers of simples are not in the park of Saint-Germain.
If our horses have short tails, it is not owing to the
brokers in the Rue de Cléry; if they have long and
sharp teeth, it is another thing. These gentlemen have
raised the price of forage.

CHAPTER LI.

A visit to Rouen—Disgust of the world—Whims of a misanthrope—
Choice of a solitude—Poets and hermits, *nam secessum et otia
quærun*t—Plan of an excursion—Strange scruple—The love of pa-
trimony—the feigned departure—The danger of dining at Paris—
The impressions and false keys—He returns not—In whom can we
place confidence?

CAPDEVILLE, after having despoiled the widow, went
direct to Rouen, but speedily returned to Paris. How-
ever, he did not fix his residence there. A prey to
domestic vexations, disgusted with the world and its
perfidies, discontented with his health, himself, and
others, Capdeville was a misanthrope, who anxiously
desired to bury himself in the country, and with this
intent traversed the environs of the capital. At Belle-
ville he saw a house, whose insulated situation suited
his love of solitude. It was in the shades of this place
that henceforward he would seek to feed his melancholy,
and breathe forth the sighs of a suffering and oppressed
soul.

Capdeville hired an apartment in the house on which
his looks had so affectionately reposed: but a misan-
thrope cannot long preserve his solitude under the

same roof with other human beings. He needs a house where he can be in ignorance that any living being is on the earth's surface but himself. This he felt, and in consequence felt a desire to procure it at any rate: no matter how high the price, provided that he sees no vestige of that society of which he has so much reason to complain. He will put up with any thing,—a castle or a cot.

Capdeville published his intention of going out to discover an hermitage where he could pass his latter days in peace. He inquired of all the country proprietors who had places for sale within a circuit of six leagues, and it was soon known through the country that he was on the look-out for a place of the kind. Everybody knew, of course, something that would suit him, but he would have only a patrimonial estate. "Well, well," said they, "since he is so scrupulous, let him look out for himself." This, in fact, he did.

Determined to make a tour, to examine what was most likely to suit him, he employed himself ostensibly in preparations for his departure; he was only to be absent three or four days, but before he departed, he was anxious to know if there was no danger in leaving a secretary, in which were ten thousand francs, which he did not wish to take with him. Being assured on this point, and full of security, he did not hesitate to set out on his proposed journey.

Capdeville did not go to a very great distance. During his sojourn in the house he had just left, he had had time to take impressions of all the keys which were requisite for his entrance into the dwelling of the landlord, who he knew was in the habit of dining in Paris, and did not return very early in the evening. By being there at dusk, Capdeville was certain of having before him all the time necessary for carrying on his operations. The sun had set, and, favoured by the darkness, he passed unperceived through Belleville, and having entered the house by help of false keys, he entered the apartment of the landlord, which he cleared out even to the linen.

Towards the end of the fifth day they began to be uneasy at the non-appearance of the misanthrope; the next day a suspicion arose. Twenty-four hours later, and there was but one opinion respecting him; he was the thief. After such a trick, mistrust all misanthropes. To whom then shall we trust, in whom place confidence? In philanthropists? By no means.

CHAPTER LII.

Adèle d'Escars—The first step—Borrowed name—Fatal inscription—The office of manners and the crown-piece—The *ladies of the house* and the resting-place—*Honour is like an island*—The measure of the prefect and the claws of Satan—A public avowal—The despair of parents—M. de Belleyne—The thieves *en herbe*—The chapter of cambrioleurs—Good head and good heart—Liberal allowances—A privation.

ONE of the most daring cambrioleuses was named Adèle d'Escars. I never saw a handsomer woman. She seemed to have been formed on the model of one of those divine Madonnas glowing from the pencil of Rafaele. Splendid fair locks, large blue eyes, which expressed all the sweetness of the soul; a delicious mouth; features beaming with candour; a graceful carriage, and an elegance almost aerial; such were the beauties which concentrated in Adèle. In mind, she was an accomplished woman—in morals, whether it was from the effect of bad disposition, or of chance, she did not shine with such perfection.

Adèle belonged to a family honest, but confined in means. Scarcely had she attained her fourteenth year, when, decoyed from her parents by one of those haridans who infest Paris, she was put in a notorious brothel. Without reference to those finished perfections of her form calculated to inspire voluptuous desires, it might be said of Adèle that she was a woman; she was a child as far as that primitive naïveté which knows not the distinction between vice and virtue, and thus it was no difficult matter to lead her into the abyss. That she might elude the search of her family, she first consented to change her name; and that her extreme youth might not throw obstacles in the way of the infamous wretch who was about to make a sale of her charms, she made herself older than she was.

Adèle, taken to the prefecture of police, was then

inscribed according to custom, without the gentlemen of the *Bureau des mœurs* making any other remarks than those which are ordinarily made by shameless libertines.

For a crown-piece, and doubtless the usual dram which, under such circumstances, the regulators of corruption do not fail to claim, she was provided with the privilege of prostituting herself. Will it be believed that it was in the hotel of a magistrate charged with the office of repressing social depravities, that this *Bureau des mœurs* existed, where a young girl whom frequently the least remonstrance would have awakened to a sense of modesty, could at any and at all times obtain authority for exercising the most infamous of practices and trades? A *Bureau des mœurs* where they gave a licence for setting all decorum and propriety at defiance; a prefect, under whose auspices this licence was granted—what morality! and yet this prefect was generally one of your pious men!

A young creature misled by corrupt advice, by offended feeling, by a momentary despair, flung herself headlong into lamentable resolutions; it was the impulse of a hot head, an inspiration of the devil. Reflection, time, difficulties would have changed the current of her ideas, but the *Bureau des mœurs* was close at hand. To be sure it was necessary for the pleasure of the police agents, their protectors, or their tyrants, that the *ladies of the house* should acquire a settlement in the country; that they should be rich enough to treat them and purchase their good offices by bribes; therefore it was necessary to collect novelty, for that only makes these establishments prosperous. Had there been any considerations, formalities, delays, questions to be asked of the aspirants who presented themselves, they might have been turned from the paths of evil; but in France there are no painful or repulsive intermediary modes, only to reach or return to well doing.

The young female presented herself at the *Bureau*

des mœurs, a register was open, and without any previous information, she was entered therein by name, and the age which they pleased to assign to her: described, measured, visited, she was from that instant irrevocably rendered up to prostitution; and however great her subsequent repentance, she was not admitted to abjure her error, or separate herself from the foul opprobrium which clung to her.

The gentlemen inspectors of manners, who had granted her the leave and liberty to dishonour and degrade herself, did not permit her to amend; her dishonour was their work. To escape their jurisdiction and leave the claws of Satan there were so many formalities to undergo, so many persons were to be summoned to attest and guarantee continuance of good conduct, that the return to a proper and correct mode of life was next to impossible.

The unfortunate woman who had once enrolled herself, could not extricate herself but by being surrounded with the confidants of her shame, and in society whither she returned, at each moment, at each step, she was exposed to the chance of meeting with reminiscences of her avowal. The entry was easy, secret, the parents or guardians were not consulted; the avowal was public, accorded by established citizens, and pronounced after proofs entirely incompatible with the torments of that arbitrary power which does not cease to menace a courtesan, even when in fact and with her full wish she has renounced the habits and paths of prostitution.

Here the simple declaration of a woman, who is anxious no longer to devote herself to the wretched infamy of a life of prostitution, should be sufficient; for to procure the means of work, it is necessary that the course of her past life should be concealed; the police, on the contrary, requires that it should be blazoned forth to the noonday sun; it insists that her disgrace shall be perpetual, the leprous spot indelible. It favoured, it courted her perversion; does not justice say

that she must oppose, by every means in her power, any modes which tend to diminish the number of the subjects?

I say it is Satan who furiously rages to hold his prey. I have seen the savage way in which the inspectors or prostitutes drag forth, even from the workshops, those who, without giving the formal notice required, had determined on forsaking their flag; the prettier, the younger they were, the more bent were these fellows on claiming them. I have seen the eagerness with which a new comer was accepted at this execrable *Bureau des mœurs*, where paternal authority was the most contemned of all.

The neophyte appeared alone, or only with the "abbess."

"Your name?"

"Adèle."

"Your age?"

"Eighteen."

"Good! Ah, Mother Chauvin, you are the woman to get hold of the girls. The young one is pretty! I see she casts her eye down. That is all well. You know the bureau must have its rights. No nonsense, you know, *manners* before anything! the commissary next; he has the time. Do you observe, gents, the brilliancy, the bloom, the fall of the loins, the graceful air? Oh, when she is polished up a little, she will be a tit-bit."

During this address, and many others equally unsuited to the place and circumstances, a father and mother, with their hearts bursting with grief, were at the second division, beseeching the chief to institute a search for their daughter, who had run away from them. They thought their child far off: it was she whom, under a borrowed name, the *Bureau des mœurs* had for ever rendered an outcast from home and from society. Poor parents! how did they jest at your sorrow!

M. de Belleyme has now effected many reforms. The tax on prostitutes no longer forms a portion of the

revenues of the police, but the ancient abuses exist in all their plenitude, and the digression we have just read is not out of place or season.

I return to Adèle d'Escars. Once in the career into which she had been tempted, Adèle rapidly went through all its vicissitudes. At first, to preserve the good graces of the gentlemen of the *Bureau des mœurs*, she was compelled to be complaisant towards them, and her first lovers were spies. At that period, as at the present day, spies and thieves of renown were the sultans of the public harems; both reigned there with despotic authority; whatever they willed, the "Mother" did not refuse; for in the police agents she saw her legal authority, and in the thieves her purveyors: on both sides they were the supporters she looked to and obeyed. Let it be noted in our tablets that every individual who plays the despot towards a courtesan, and defends her when summoned from and against all, if he be not a police agent, is always either a robber by profession, or a robber *en herbe*.

Adèle only ceased to be sought by the policemen to be under the law of *Guillaume, Lerouge, Victor-des-Bois, Coco-Lacour, and Poillier*, who by turns constrained her to become their mistress. It was in their society that she familiarized herself to the idea of robbery; she had some scruples, but they insensibly succeeded in obviating and removing them. They pointed out to her the advantages of this industry they exercised, and this industry she followed. Her first essays were brilliant; she did not begin as others have done by taking a watch or purse, that would have been, as they say, to play with trifles at the threshold, and Adèle carried her views higher. Amongst her lovers many excelled in the art of making false keys. She began to acquire their dangerous skill, and made in that way progress so rapid that she soon had a deliberative voice in the chapter or assembly of *cambrisseurs*, who allied her to them in their expeditions.

Adèle very soon acquired the reputation of an ad-

mirable head-piece : some accidents more or less severe that had befallen her friends, gave her the opportunity of proving that her heart was equally good : all recognized in her that virtue in their line of life which they term *probity*. She never abandoned him amongst them who underwent the robber's fate.

If a sentence separated her from a lover, she always chose one of his most tried and faithful comrades to replace his loss, but he only became her knight on condition that he would not prevent her from assisting the unfortunate prisoner. Adèle had thus a string of attachments, the objects of which, equally cherished and beloved, at length were sent to the *bagnes*, or at least cast into prison. To comfort their lot, she redoubled her courage and skill. However, the number of these pensioners increased so rapidly, that, not to be compelled to suppress their allowances, which would have detracted from her reputation for probity, she was compelled to submit to a very cruel privation. A lover is an associate to whom it is necessary in a division of prey to adjudge the lion's share. She had no more lovers. Adèle had sufficient experience to get rid of a fellow-labourer. She then flew with her own wings, and worked alone for two years with incredible good fortune ; every thing succeeded to her wish. At length the moment arrived when a lucky hit, surpassing all her hopes, made her experience for the first time the embarrassment of wealth.

CHAPTER LIII.

The pangs of solitude—Love—Living as man and wife—The excellent pupil—A first attempt—The breaking in—Where the devil is the money?—Compensation—A scene of enthusiasm—Life is a bed of eiderdown, full of pleasure—The danger of opposite windows—The perfidious curtains—The reflection—A bedroom hussar—The crusade—The window blinds of curiosity—The judge's beard—A chance occurrence—Sixteen years' imprisonment.

ADELE seeing herself *uppish* in the world, felt all the pangs of the solitude to which she had resigned herself. She experienced a void which she could not account for, or, rather, which she defined so well, and thus she determined on listening to the first gallant who should come and declare his passion to her, provided always and nevertheless that this said gallant should be a man to her taste. The one who pleased her most, to whom she was equally pleasing, was one Rigottier, the most amiable of billiard swindlers.

It was after a pool, in which he came off conqueror, that he put in her hands a love-letter, stuffed with the expressions which love had inspired, for Rigottier was really enamoured of her. Adèle, who before was dying with fear lest she should be compelled to make the first advances, received his declaration, and the joy of her triumph took care not to let her swain sigh out his life in useless and pitiable lamentations. By pitying herself she pitied him, and as sympathy was manifest, their coming together took place immediately, without the intervention of any officer of the civil law.

Adèle could not be ignorant that a woman ought to have nothing concealed from her husband, and had no sooner united her lot with Rigottier, than she hastened to evince to him her little talents, and all the profit she drew from them. He was enchanted at the skill with which she handled the file. He wished to try if he

had any talents that way. Adèle found that he had, and cultivated them; and as lessons never are more profitable or more quickly learnt, than when communicated by one we adore, in a very short time Rigottier knew how to make a key with as much perfection as the most expert of locksmiths. Most certainly, in following on a green cloth the chance of a cue, to which fortune is too frequently unfaithful, Rigottier had not worked at his vocation; Adèle undertook to direct him into it, and the most perfect success crowned his efforts. Nevertheless she would not allow him to venture before he was perfectly master of his craft, so much did she fear that some clumsy trick might ruin him. At first she only took him with her to keep watch, but afterwards, at some expeditions at which he had only looked on with folded arms, it was agreed that he should have henceforward a finger in the pie.

A lady, who was reckoned rich, resided in the Rue de la Feronnerie. She had a good deal of money, her maid said, and Adèle projected to make it change owners. The keys were already made, and operated magically; to make a right use of them it was only necessary to seize on the propitious moment. The maid had promised to let Adèle know when her mistress went out, and she kept her word. One day she came and told her that her mistress would go out in the evening, and forthwith they concerted the plan of operation.

"Come," said Adèle to her pupil, "we cannot recede now; you shall go in with me, I wish to see how you will begin; it is a splendid affair; no better could be chosen for your first attempt."

Rigottier did not recede; he went with Adèle, and as soon as they were certain that the lady had gone out, they went up to her apartment, which they entered without difficulty, and once within, that they might feel themselves at home, they fastened the bolts, and then leisurely proceeded to open all the places which they supposed contained the money: a secretary, two chests, a wardrobe, a bookcase, and many other

pieces of furniture were broken open, but nowhere did they find the cash mentioned by the female servant. Where could it be? A note which met their eyes informed them that it had gone to the notary's. This was enough to make them tear their hair and rend their garments; but far from abandoning themselves to despair that was fruitless, the deceived pair, surveying with a glance the many valuables around them, judged that from the bosom of this disorder there might arise a mass of objects that could comfort and even compensate them; and there being still wherewithal to recompense, they selected some jewellery, plate, lace, and linen.

In an instant they arranged all, and had carefully collected every thing that was valuable, and made packets of them; the bolt was drawn back, and they were about to depart. Adèle, transported with satisfaction, threw her arms around her lover's neck and embraced him. Rigottier was worthy of her; she had admired his coolness, and could not sufficiently praise the steadiness with which he had seconded her. In her enthusiasm she embraced him again; one kiss called for another—Rigottier repaid her tenfold; the exchange was rapid, it was a rolling fire, it intoxicates them, they abandon themselves to it, they forget themselves. They are not on earth; there were no more gendarmes, no more spies, no more laws, tribunals, remembrances, cautions; love dispels all dangers—the thunder may fall, the ceiling may crush them, the house may give way, the universe may be swallowed up, the pair see, hear nothing.

Et si fractus illabatur orbis impavidum ferient ruinæ.

Adèle and Rigottier were no longer of this world; for them life had no thorns, no asperities, no bitterness, life is of eiderdown, and filled with delights. This may be so; but in Paris the streets have two sides of the way, and it is sometimes prudent to think of the inconvenience of opposite neighbours. The lady whose absence caused so profound a security, had not gone far away. Opposite to her own apartment, and exactly on

the same story, lived one of her friends. She had gone to see her, and made one at a party of Boston, when suddenly, whilst somebody was shuffling the cards, her eyes were mechanically directed towards one of her own windows.

"Ah, ladies," she cried, "something very extraordinary is going on in my bed-room."

"What's the matter? What's the matter?"

"Do you perceive that there is a light?"

"You are mistaken, it is only the reflection."

"What do you say, reflection? I am not blind. I see it moving."

"Yes, stirring; that is always your way."

"Oh, indeed! this time you will say it is no illusion. There, there, M. Planard, look; do you see the curtain at the window near my bed dancing?"

"You are right, I certainly see a peculiar movement."

"It increases—the fringes, the valance, all tremble, all is agitated; if it continues, the canopy will fall down."

"It does not cease; what the devil can it be? they may be thieves."

"Thieves! ah, my dear M. Planard, you open my eyes. Good God, they are thieves; quick, quick, let us go down."

"Let us go down, let us go down," repeated all the company, and each, according to his or her respective degrees of agility, jumped down the stairs by twos, by threes, and even by fours, to get down quickly.

The lady whose apartment had been visited without her knowledge was more trembling, more agitated than her curtains. She pushed open the small door of her porter's lodge.

"My flambeau, my flambeau," she exclaimed with impatience, mingled with trouble; "pray make haste; you will get a light to-morrow."

"Do you wish it to run?"

"I tell you there are thieves in the house."

"Thieves."

"Yes, thieves!"

"Where are they?"

"In my apartment."

"In your apartment, Madame Bourgeois! in your apartment! you are joking."

"No, indeed, I do not joke; run quickly and call the principal."

"M. Desloyers? I will."

"Beg him to be so good as to come as soon as possible."

The porter hastened to fulfil his mission, and was not slow in returning accompanied by M. Desloyers, who, at the single word thief, had already taken his measures of attack. Like a regular bed-room hussar, he had not put off his night-gown or cotton cap; his spectacles had replaced the protectors of green gauze; he had slipped on his stockings, and tied his garters, and was armed with a spit which he had seized as he came through the kitchen.

"Ah, ah! my friends," said he, "prudence and no noise. We must go up, must we not? Chut, chut! I think I hear—it is a carriage. A moment: do nothing hastily. Everybody must take their shoes off. Chut! chut! You, Monsieur Tripot (*he addressed the porter*), as there may be numbers to oppose, take your stick; Madame Tripot, take your broom-handle; and mademoiselle had better get the frying-pan; the ladies can have a chair each to attack the enemy. Now for the avant guard. I will undertake to protect the retreat; and if there be any resistance, I will betake myself wherever it may be best for me to take refuge. I am understood; and let the arrangements thus proceed: come, precede me, I will follow."

The whole party huddled together, and went up the staircase. On reaching the second flight, they pause—*Chut, there they are!* The porter, who formed the avant guard, quietly introduced the key, and the door yielded. *Ah!* was the general cry of surprise; astonish-

ment and indignation succeeded: a man and woman, broken furniture and parcels, one on the other. What a picture! The ladies, as by a spontaneous movement, placed before their visual organs that discreet hand—that officious screen, which permits curiosity to be satisfied whilst consulting modesty. Outside and inside, all was motionless. Even the active curtains, the performers, the spectators, remained as if petrified: no person spoke, no person said a word, so much were all dumb-founded, so greatly did stupefaction seize on all. The porter was mute also; but he could keep so no longer; and, breaking silence, he said—

“Ah! this is a new go, indeed. The commissary must come, and the beard of the judge must smell it out.”

The commissary, exempts, and guard, whom a neighbour had fetched, were not long in appearing. They seized the two lovers. Adèle, the first interrogated, was not at all disconcerted. She protested that her appearance in the room, when she was surprised, was only the effect of a fortuitous accident: she knew nothing of the man with whom she was found in company: she had only seen him once in her life; that as she was a common woman, he had accosted her in the street, and they had entered the house together, believing it was a house of accommodation. A door was open on the staircase, and the opportunity, the time, &c.; besides, she was an utter stranger to the making up of the parcels, and if a robbery was committed she was as innocent of it as the babe unborn, and washed her hands of the affair.

This falsehood was well devised; but Rigottier, with whom Adèle could concert no plan, did not keep to the same text; and from the difference of their statements resulted a sentence of sixteen years' confinement in irons. Rigottier went with the chain in 1802. Ten years later I met him on the quays; he had escaped. I apprehended him; and he afterwards died at the bagne.

CHAPTER LIV.

The fruits of economy—Plan of amendment—The skilful workwoman—Precarious existence—Consequences of prejudice—The Mont de Piété—Despair—She must die—Cruel punishment—The instruments of crime—Resistance to temptation.

AT the termination of her sentence, Adèle left Saint Lazare with a sum of nine hundred francs (nearly 38*l*. English money), the profits of her labour whilst confined. She was completely reformed, and had determined on leading an irreproachable life. Her first care was to procure a small apartment, which she furnished, and decent apparel. This done, she had one hundred and fifty francs left. This was enough to keep the wolf from the door for a brief space, and yet was but a sorry prospect. She went out in quest of work; and as she was an admirable needle-woman, she found employment very readily. Employed in an establishment for several months, she had every reason to be content with her lot. But the existence of a liberated convict, male or female, is precarious. It was found that she had been shut up in Saint Lazare; and then commenced those troubles from which it is so difficult to escape when once branded with the mark of justice. Adèle, without having in any other way given offence, was unfeelingly dismissed. She changed her quarters, and succeeded in getting again engaged. Placed in charge of the linen at a furnished house, that she might avoid the least chance of committing any indiscretion, she determined to have no fellowship with any persons but those whose confidence she had gained. But in spite of this precaution, she could not avoid the reminiscences of past life. Recognised and pointed out, she was again thrust out from home and shelter on a pitiless world. From this day she had no resource, no chance of doing any thing without experiencing the

effects of that reproach which results from infamy perpetuated by prejudice.

Adèle had no resource but her needle. In vain did she seek to turn it to account: three months elapsed, and she did not meet with one charitable soul who, availing themselves of her skill, would compassionate her situation.

The moment arrived when, to subsist, she was compelled to have recourse to her few goods, and, by a series of petty pledges and pawnings, all the garments in her wardrobe went to the Mont de Piété, that gulf of iniquity, dug by the usurious hypocrite under the feet of the necessitous. Reduced to the most absolute nakedness, Adèle determined on ending her woes by suicide, and she ran to throw herself into the Seine, when on the Pont Neuf she met Suzanne Golier, one of the companions of her confinement. Adèle related her troubles to this friend, who dissuaded her from the resolution she had taken.

"Come now, come now," said Suzanne; "shall we do ill when another is doing well? Come to the house; my sister and I have opened an embroidery shop; we have work, and you shall help us, and we will live together. If we have only bread, well! we shall only have bread to eat."

The proposal could not come more propitiously: Adèle accepted it.

It was then the commencement of winter, embroidery was in great request; but at the end of the carnival the dead season set in. At the end of six weeks Adèle and her friends were plunged into the most horrible distress. Frederic, the husband of one of them, was established as a locksmith. Had he been in full business he might have aided them; but unfortunately he did not earn even enough to pay his way, and defray the expenses of his shop: greater penury could not be imagined.

One day Adèle was in the shop of this man, who, for more than forty-eight hours, had not, any more than herself, taken any sort of nourishment.

“Well,” said the locksmith, affecting to joke, whilst he uttered words of the most sinister import,—“we must die, little dears, there is no more prog. Yes, we must die,” he repeated; and, whilst he forced a smile, his features were convulsed, and the cold sweat started to his brow. Adèle, silent, and her face overspread with a mortal paleness, was leaning on the shop-board. She suddenly arose, and experienced a vast emotion. “We must die—must we?” she breathed out, looking with inconceivable feeling at the tools with which she was surrounded. It was the light of a horrid hope which came across her. Adèle was convulsed and trembling; a burning fever shot through her frame, consumed her: between the cravings of hunger and the terrors of conscience, she endured agony that almost rent her heartstrings. During these tortures, with her hand on a bunch of keys, she thrust them from her.

“Good God,” she cried, “take away these instruments of crime! When I have so much desire to do right, shall, must these be my last resource.”

And that she might not fall into temptation, the unfortunate creature sought safety by hastily running out.

CHAPTER LV.

The *bureau* of charity—The door of the philanthropist—The dowager's equipage—An accident—The good coal-heaver—The committee of succour—The mob in action—The basket-woman's collection—Little people have great virtues—Like master like man—The shirt-sleeve—Victory proclaimed too soon—The tall figure—The exempts—Unheard-of brutality—The carrying off—The carriage departs.

ADELE had heard that in the division where she lived there was an office of charity; there, if benevolence be not a vain name, the poor ought to be relieved and comforted instantly. The desire of maintaining herself honestly re-animated her courage; she summoned all the strength that was left, and dragged herself to the door of the philanthropist, who had been pointed out to her as the dispenser of the alms of her division. Adèle asked to speak to him.

"Monsieur cannot be seen."

"I am dying with hunger."

"Monsieur is at dinner, and will not allow himself to be disturbed during meal times."

"Gracious heaven!—will he soon have finished? When can I return and see him?"

"Oh, to-morrow."

"To-morrow!"

"Not before twelve o'clock, do you understand; Monsieur receives no person sooner."

"Ah, do allow me to see him at least this evening; you will restore me to life!"

"I have already told you it is impossible; go away and don't tease me or yourself any more about it."

Adèle turned away, and scarcely had she passed over the threshold of the door, which was shut upon her with violence, when her knees sinking under her, she endeavoured to go a few paces, her sight grew feeble, she stumbled, she fell, and in her fall her temple struck against a sharp stone.

"Stop, coachman! stop!—you will crush her.

"Whip away, I tell you! Who ordered you to attend to these plebeians? Whip on, I desire you!" ordered the shrill loud voice of an old crabbed dowager, whose equipage was rattling over the stones.

"The plebeians are in your skin!" replied a coal-heaver; "won't you stop, you old bundle of feathers?" and darting at the horses' head, he stopped them with his powerful hand, whilst some of the passers by, summoned by the noise of the circumstance, dragged from under the wheel of the carriage a female bathed in blood.

The old dowager vowed fire and faggot against the wretches who had dared to intercept her course. She will be too late for the *Comité des Secours*;—that was most provoking;—the sitting will have commenced. There is not now in Paris any safety for people of consequence; the passages are all stopped.

"Landan, do your duty, and punish these insolent creatures! Landan, you do not hear me: I am losing time of the utmost consequence, and for whom?—for a wretch—a drunken woman!"

"Does not Madame la Comtesse see that I cannot get forward."

"Tell the chasseur to take the number of that man's ticket: I will complain to the police, and he shall rot in gaol. Take me to the minister this instant!"

At this threat, the terrified coal-heaver let go the reins, and the carriage of Madame la Comtesse, more rapid than lightning, more terrible than thunder, disappeared in the midst of hootings and maledictions, the impotent clamours of which only excited in her mind rage and contempt.

Adèle was laid on a bench near the door which but the moment before had been shut with so much brutality. Her swoon continued, and she had not recovered the use of her senses; two mechanics supported her. Amongst the spectators whom the event had assembled each tried who could be of most service to

her, or soonest lend her aid. A fishwoman pierced the crowd, tore her chemise to staunch the blood and heal the wound; the fruit-woman at the corner ran with some broth; an errand-boy ran for some wine; and a young milliner hastened to lend her the aid of her bottle of salts. The crowd had become very considerable.

"What's the matter? what's it all about?"

"A woman is taken ill."

"Then send some of the crowd away, make a larger circle round about her; would you stifle her?" and the circle was immediately extended.

Adèle gave no signs of life; she was motionless; some person opened her eye-lid. "The eye looks well! it is only a fainting fit."

"Does her pulse beat?"

"No!"

"Then she is dead. Put your hand on her heart."

"I feel nothing."

"Perhaps something is too tight about her; cut the strings of her clothes."

"She is not cold."

"If there were a doctor he would know what to do."

"They have been to fetch one, but that M. Durpetrin would not come."

"There was only a little way for him to come either."

"Oh! if it had been for a rich patient, he would soon have been here."

"Let's try again if she will take any broth."

"That's right, mother, try and make her drink a few drops."

"Throw some water in her face."

"There is nothing so dangerous as that, give her some wine rather; that will bring her to."

They put the spoon to Adèle's lips, and the broth passed down her throat. "Ah! so much the better, she will recover;" said the helpers and lookers on, with marked satisfaction.

Adèle let fall one of her hands which were lying on her knees, and then breathing the long sigh which

comes from a person whom death oppresses, she opened her eyes widely, but, oppressed with the glare of light, their haggard and sunken looks wandered vaguely about without distinguishing any fixed object. At length a flood of tears flowed down her pallid cheeks.—“How is it with you, my child?” inquired those standing by; but just then Adèle caught sight of the cup which was offered to her, and seizing it with eagerness she greedily lifted it to her parched lips, but her weakened powers refused to aid the longing desire she felt to drain its contents at one draught, and in the fruitless endeavour to fix the cup against her lips, the chattering and convulsive grinding of her teeth overpowered her weak efforts, and the cup fell from her feeble hands. “Poor soul! she is dying of want,” cried one compassionate voice. “She is expiring from mere starvation,” exclaimed a second. “Heavens! to think that while so many are revelling in luxury, a poor fellow-creature should die like a dog!”

However, by degrees poor Adèle recovered the use of her scattered senses, and her first attempt was to break a piece of bread which a water-carrier had slipped into her hand; but when conveyed to her mouth, her parched palate refused to lend its aid, and after vainly endeavouring to masticate the aliment so necessary to recruit her failing strength, her head dropped again upon her breast, a cold perspiration stood on her brow, and exhaustion appeared to have claimed its victim.

“Come, friends, let us make a collection for the unfortunate girl,” said an old woman, who, forgetting in the contemplation of another’s misery the weight of the huge basket beneath which she was bending, handed round to each individual a sort of fur cap, in which, by way of example, she first placed a forty-sous piece, and varying the mode of her address according as the appearance of those she addressed seemed to require it, she appealed to the benevolence of all. “Pray, sir, pity the young creature, and put in something, as little as you please, but pray don’t throw away this oppor-

tunity of helping a fellow-creature. Come, my good lad, see if there is a trifle still left in the corner of your waistcoat pocket. Oh! my noble soldier, throw in a franc just for luck—you will be never the poorer for helping a poor girl. That's right, my worthy old gentleman, let your purse-strings crack; it will be all the same fifty years hence, and you will be neither the richer nor the poorer for it: now then, my good man, throw in a few of those louis which have been burning a hole in your pocket so long.—Pray remember the cap," continued she, shaking it in the face of an old lady who seemed anxious to escape her eye. "I beg pardon, but I fancy my lady has not been able to put in on account of the crowd. Stand back all of you, and let this kind lady give her assistance.—Many thanks, my kind madam," added she, when her oratory was crowned with success, "may God bless you—'tis a charity well placed."

The indefatigable basket-woman completed her round, without having experienced a refusal from one of those to whom she had applied; all had gladly seized the opportunity of performing a kind action, purchased, as it was by several, at the price of many a privation.

"There," cried a clear-starcher, throwing in a half franc, previously destined to procure for her the treat of a luxurious supper, "there it goes, and I shall fast to-night; but I would rather go without a day's food than see yonder poor creature in the state she is."

When the lower order of people perform a praiseworthy action, they are not ashamed to give public vent to their feelings, and to express aloud the sacrifice they have imposed upon themselves; and this from no spirit of ostentation, which would lead them to extol their own act; far from it, no after-regrets disturb their enjoyment of having thus aided a fellow-creature. What virtue and self-denial may be found in such exclamations as the following: "Well, it will be all the same six hours hence, and I shall just have to deny myself the pleasure of going to the barrière, as I had promised."

"I had intended to have put into the lottery ; well I must just wait till next time."

"Ah to be sure, we ought to help one another."

"Pooh ! pooh, wife, I know what I'm giving. I must go without my pint a day for a little while ; that won't hurt me ; here, mother with the cap, come this way ; only to think of what poor destitute souls are exposed to !"

"I shall make up what I now give by some fortunate bargain, and if I do not even take handsel, I can't help it ; bad luck to-day, better to-morrow. Good bye to my smart new handkerchief, I must wait a little longer before I buy it, that's all."

"True, my pretty one, do you but feed the hungry and pity those who need it ; heaven will reward you never fear."

"Françoise, do you observe I have actually parted with what I have been saving up to redeem my ear-rings."

"Oh, I see ! well, I have done the same thing ; and now my bracelets must stay where they are till good luck comes again."

"Pray, good people, do not push so dreadfully ;—if you cannot help the poor creature, you had better go your ways, and leave room for those who will."

The persevering basket-woman continued her rounds, renewing her entreaties to each fresh comer whom curiosity instigated to approach the assembly. Undaunted by silence, or even direct refusal, she still kept up her tone of supplication.

"See," cried she, "here come some smart ladies ; let's see what they will do for us." She hurried towards them, but the females she alluded to, who had just quitted the house before which the whole scene had taken place, just turned their heads, and then redoubled their speed to escape her importunities.

"Holloa there, you people !" exclaimed a fat over-fed footman, with powdered head and gaudy livery—"Holloa, I say," continued he, advancing carelessly, leaning upon a broom : "what are you all about, blocking up the door-way in this manner?"

"What does the man say?" asked one.

"Why, I say that if you do not take yourselves off pretty quickly, I will make you ; that is all."

"And pray, my worthy sir, does not the street belong to us as well as to you?"

"God bless you, my friend," replied one amongst the crowd, "the fool only echoes the whim or selfish command of his mistress."

"Hold your pert tongue!" vociferated the enraged lacquey, "or I will let you know who I am and who my mistress is too, in a way you will not like : however, I'll soon turn that impostor off the bench where she is lying, playing off her tricks ;"—so saying, he sought to break through the crowd, but in vain ; he was driven back with a thousand hisses, cries, groans, and execrations.

"Well," cried he, foaming with rage, "we'll soon see who's master, however ; you shall just have a benefit from my slop-pail."

"Ha, ha, ha ! you rinsing of the waste-butt ; oh, oh, oh !"

"You won't stir ? Well, then, here goes : remember, he laughs best who laughs the last."

He stepped a few paces backwards, and pushed the door gently. "Molly," said he, "bring me a pail of water here, and see me christen all these rascals."

"Oh, oh, that is what you are after, you blackguard, is it ? We hear you. Come here and see how clean we will wash your sneaking face !—Now I have you, you unfeeling brute !—hurra ! hurra !—Roll the fellow in the kennel !"

"Let me go, let me go, or I'll"—

"Ah ! so you think to bully a bit, do you ? Take care what you say, or we will serve you out.—Bravo ! bravo !—go it, go it !—give it him well !—serve him out !"

"Fair play ! fair play !" cried the frightened domestic. "Really, gentleman, this is unjust :—I am not to blame—I but fulfil my orders—stay where you are all night—'tis all one to me, but the servant must yield to

the master, and when master ordered me to drive you away, how could I help it?"

"Who is your master? he seems to have very little pity for the unfortunate."

"Faith, if all those whose occupation and condition renders them familiar with the poor, were not of the same way of thinking, their dwellings would be as much beset as the doors of a mendicity society."

Whilst the servant was speaking, he continued, like a prudent general, to keep up a skilful retreat; and whilst he amused his enemies by a feigned capitulation, he reached, by one quick step, the street door; by a second movement, as abrupt and unexpected, he managed to shake off his enemies, and make good his exit into the house, leaving one of his sleeves behind him as a trophy of victory, at the sight of which a general burst of riotous exhilaration was heard.

"Let the hang-dog hide his rascally face!" cried they. "Well done, sneak; ask friend Molly to hide you in her slop-pail you wished to borrow a few minutes ago."

However, these victorious rejoicings were soon interrupted by the sight of two individuals, whose scantily cut great-coats, black cravats, long canes, and vulgar appearance augured ill for the triumphant party. From the velocity with which they moved along, it might have been conjectured that they were hastening to lend their aid to extinguish a fire.

"This way, gentlemen, this way." Such at least was the meaning to be gathered from the gesture of a tall figure clad in a thick-wadded wrapping coat, and who seemed to be the leader of the party. This tall figure proceeded onwards to about forty paces from the group; and after having bestowed on them a gracious inclination of the head, and a last sign with his finger, at the turning of a street, he disappeared,—or, rather more conformably to decorum, the silent gentleman enconced himself from whence he could plainly observe all that was passing.

"Here come the exempts!"

"Hallo! out of the way, clear the way!" and elbowing, driving, pushing, flourishing their canes, and displaying that staff of office, the sight of which silences all tongues, and paralyzes every arm, they proceeded straight up to Adèle; and, taking her brutally by the elbow—"Get up, my girl," cried they, "and march before us!"

"Shame! shame!" exclaimed the honest fruit-woman, whose praiseworthy activity in behalf of the sufferer had procured so liberal a contribution, "to ill use thus a poor soul: 'tis disgraceful to you as men. What harm has this unfortunate girl done you or any one else?"

"Go about your business: nobody wishes to trouble you: go home with you."

"Don't you see that the poor creature is almost at her last breath?"

"Will you be advised? Do you wish to place your neck between the prison bars?"

"Not I, indeed."

"Well, then, be off with you."

"Alas!" exclaimed Adèle faintly, "for pity's sake, gentlemen, let me have time to recover my breath."

"Never mind that: you'll have plenty of breathing time in the guard-house."

"Oh! I conjure you take pity upon my weakness."

"Come, come, we are up to these tricks: they won't do for us, my pretty one; so none of your gammon and wry faces. She's a deep hand at it, I see; and as for her dying of hunger, she is as far from it as that good gentleman."—(*Pointing to a little fat stumpy pastry-cook who was amongst the spectators.*)

"For the love of God, have mercy upon me!"

"Will you never have done with your rignaroles? Come, march, I tell you; and you shall tell your tale at the guard-house. What! do you suppose we have

nothing to do but to listen to your whinings? Troop, I say."

The wretched girl endeavoured to stand; but a fresh giddiness seized her, and she fell at their feet.

With a volley of oaths and threats, one of the exempts seized her as though she had been a wild beast.

"I'll be hanged," said he, "if you shall not come, or you shall give a good reason why. Do you hear me, you baggage? March, I say." And again bestowing on her a violent snatch, he tore her apron from her waist, and the money which had been so kindly collected for her fell to the ground and rolled in all directions. Some children, who perceived the accident, brought back some few pieces; but before half of the number dropped could be recovered, a hackney-coach passed by, and was immediately ordered to stop. The exempts dragged the body of the insensible Adèle towards it, who looked, indeed, like a corpse whom assassins were hurrying to the grave, in order to conceal their crime, and threw her roughly on one of the seats.

"What are you all staring at so curiously," cried they to the spectators of this savage scene; "did you never see a woman drunk before?"

Scandalous! infamous! disgusting! murmured the bystanders, who were not to be duped by this shallow artifice. However, the coach door was shut; the coachman mounted his box. "To the dépôt, to the prefecture, if you understand that better;" and, so saying, the vehicle rolled on.

CHAPTER LVI.

The inside of a coach—Two wretches—*La Morgue* and the corps-de-garde—False humanity—The compassionate soldiers—the invincible Eighteenth—The good captain—Who gives what he has, gives what he can—The return home—A straw bed—A delirium—The candle-end—Gratitude.

ADELE had lost all consciousness. The two policemen, who had placed her between them, rubbed her hard, and chafed her hands in the hope of reviving her; the coachman, who was listening, heard them say, in words which denoted their embarrassment,—

“Is she acting a farce, or is she not?”

“Let us see, but don’t play the fool.”

“Hold your jaw.”

“Well, I think that it is no joke.”

“Pinch her.”

“Well, it’s no use to pinch her, she does not move nor stir.”

“What! does not her eyelid even twinkle?”

“On my word, I think she is done for.—(*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha! What a go! what a farce!”

“What! do you think she would play us such a trick?”

“’Pon my soul, there’s nothing to laugh at; we’re in a nice concern with this lump of carrion?”

“Stuff, stuff! There is no difficulty in the thing: let’s leave her at *La Morgue**,—that will be the shortest and only way.—(*He calls*)—Coachee!”

“No, no; let’s go to the nearest guard-house.”

“Very right: we can say we picked her up in the streets through humanity. They may then do what they like with her, it will be no business of ours.”

* *La Morgue* is a species of charnel-house in Paris, where all corpses found and unknown are deposited until owned by relatives or friends.—TRANSL.

"I know all that as well as you can tell me; but who will pay the fare?"

"Oh, the devil! I never thought of that."

"Of course I shall not."

"Nor I."

"Well then, old boy, she must: I saw a forty-sous piece."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, for I have it in my hand."

"All right. Well, then (*addressing the coachman*), drive to the next guard-house."

They arrived there; and having exchanged a few words with the officer on duty, the policemen took their leave. Whilst the officer was full of admiration at their generous behaviour, Adèle, whom they had lifted from the coach, was lying on a bench near the stove.

A SERGEANT. "Captain, what are we to do with this woman?"

OFFICER. "We have only to inform the commissary; for there is no likelihood of her coming to herself."

SOLDIER. "She is, perhaps, in a lethargy."

SECOND SOL. "Good, M. Delormes, with your lethargy, you don't seem to see the bump she's got on her head."

CAPTAIN. "Is she wounded? We ought to have secured those men. I thought they had a hanging look about them."

FIRST SOL. "My stars, what a deep cut! Sergeant, only look, see the blood begins to spout out again."

SER. "I'faith it is very red."

OFF. "Then she still lives, the warmth has restored the circulation: who is smoking here? Corporal, smoke a little under her nose."

CORPORAL. "That will only do her more harm 'han good."

CAPT. "Don't be afraid."

COR. (*Who approached the bench and sent out a long puff of smoke.*) "It seems to do famously."

CAPT. "That's well, that's well; do so again."

The return to life was announced by a slight contraction of the countenance, and by a convulsive movement of the limbs. Adèle breathed again, coughed, and by an effort raised herself on the seat, where she had been recumbent.

The CAPT. (*in an under-tone to the sergeant,*) "She looks like a spectre."

SER. "Exactly like a body dug up from the grave."

A CONSCRIPT. "If I were not here I should be frightened, and think I saw a ghost."

Adèle looked about her, and after some moments, with those accents expressive of a soul full of sweetness, said, "I was so well." Her horizon cleared, darkness was dissipated. "Where am I? (*with emotion*) the guard! in prison! good God, in prison!"

OFF. "Cheer up, my good woman, you are with those who will not harm you."

ADELE. "Ah, sir! Holy Virgin! what have I done?"

SER. "As long as you are with us, there is no fear of any person harming you: are we not the *invincible eighteenth*? (*He handed his canteen to her.*) Drink, that will do you good—it's good; at least it cost six sous the half pint; so it ought to be."

AD. "Ah, good sir, M. Sergeant, I thank you; excuse —"

SER. "I will not; you shall drink, or tell me why not. Come, come, it will revive you."

The persuasions of the sergeant were so powerful and pressing, that Adèle dared no longer refuse, and soon recovered sufficient strength to be able to answer the questions which the officer addressed to her. She did not complain, she related the truth; and in her mouth, truth was so eloquent, that the *vieilles moustaches* (hardened veterans), enraged at first with the brutality of the policemen, were surprised afterwards to find a tear starting to their eyes.

CAPT. "Well, sergeant, what's the matter with you? I thought you as tough as a hog's hide."

SER. "I am; but injustice is abhorrent to me; and then, captain, to own the truth, I could not prevent its coming."

COR. "I am not mighty soft and sensitive, but it is too much for me, I cannot bear to see a woman weep. It gives me so much uneasiness, that for nothing I would give her all my *chink* (*taking from his pocket an old glove which had served him for a purse*). I have twenty-two sous and a half, and I am d—d if I don't give them all to her. Why make any ado about it? Why shouldn't I? with the allowance bread to-day—Well, who collects the cash? Let him have all, the small and large pieces, from a liard to six francs."

SER. "I should like to make it forty, but the thing's impossible; thirty-five, and the bag is empty: if I were skinned alive, they could not get another dump out of me."

A SOL. "Here are my twenty-five centimes and my ration. Comrades, come, shell out, you who have got any. There are some chaps under the bed. (*He pulled one out by the leg.*) It's Lorrain—I would have bet a wager of that."

ALL. "Ah! we may well say, '*villain Lorrain, traitor to God and his neighbour.*'"

LORRAIN. "I am asleep."

SOL. "Five sous."

LOR. "Leave me alone."

SOL. "Tip, and sleep afterward."

LOR. "I an't got no blunt."

SER. "You can't comb the devil if he has no hair."

CAPT. (*taking ten francs from his purse,*) "Leave him alone, I will pay for him and the sentinels."

AD. "Captain you are too good."

CAPT. "Your situation demands care: if you like, I will have you conveyed to the Hotel Dieu."

COR. "There is an hospital nearer; La Pitié is not two steps distance."

SER. "You can't get in at night there, or anywhere else."

CAPT. "Yet accidents may happen at night as well as in the day; and for an hospital to fulfil all the purposes of its establishment, it should be open at all hours."

SER. "I beg your pardon, captain, but you are in error."

CAPT. "If that be the case, she must be conducted to her home. (*To Adèle.*) You have a home?"

AD. "I had one to-day; I was there with some friends, who are, perhaps, at this moment even worse than myself."

CAPT. "Do you feel capable of walking?"

AD. (*getting up and staggering.*) "Oh, yes; I am not so weak as I was."

CAPT. "Well, then, some person shall accompany you. Numbers seven and eight, leave your cartridge-boxes, take the lantern, and go with this female; lead her gently, stop as often as it may be necessary, and mind that she does not lose her money."

SER. "Mind, my good woman; remember ten francs the captain gave you; ten, eleven, twelve, fourteen, seventeen; seven francs eleven sous that you had in your pockets: in all twenty-four francs fifty-five centimes. Now look, I tie them up in the corner of your apron: twenty-four francs eleven sous tied up in that knot. Can you now say that soldiers are the scum of the earth, and that there are no good fellows in the Invincibles?"

Adèle would have uttered every testimony that gratitude could suggest: "You are kind, very kind."

"Thank them another time," said the captain; "go now and sleep, you must need repose."

"I think so," exclaimed number seven, "after a thump like that she has received. Cheer up, my little

woman; lean on us. Don't be afraid; I am stout and strong, and so is my comrade."

"Yes, yes; lean as heavy as you like."

It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when Adèle reached her abode. They knocked at the door, which Frederic opened. On penetrating the retreat which Adèle pointed out as her domicile, the two soldiers were actually frightened: not the smallest portion of furniture; the four walls; some trusses of straw, and on them were lying two women, without sheets or coverlids, without the least covering of any kind to shield them.

"Where shall we lay her down?" said one of the soldiers.

"Give me that! give me that!" said Frederic, snatching from their hands a loaf, which he bit with eagerness.

"By Mars! he is hungry. Come, ladies, rise; we bring you some provisions. Come, Parisian, divide this ration; have you a knife?"

THE PARISIAN. "What do we want with that?"

After having broken the bread, he approached one of the women, and taking her by the hand, said—

"Well, are you dead?"

She turned on one side: "Ah, is it you, *mon doux Jesus*?" Then, seeing the morsel of bread, she seized and devoured it.

Susanne, whom Adèle approached, raised herself up without answering her, and after having looked at the light with a smile which made one shudder, she extends her arm—"How beautiful the angels are! Do you see, my sister? they have not deceived me; it is Adèle! She is with them! I should like to devour a wing! I knew that they would ask me to the wedding! She is all in white! She had a hat on! No, sir, I don't dance after supper. The goose! the goose!—yes, yes, the goose!—ah, certainly! I like it very much! Be so kind as to pass those pigeons to me!"

A SOL. "She is at supper; but it is evident to me that her cupboard's empty."

ADELE. "Take this, my dearest girl; it is bread."

SUSANNE. "Bread! for' shame! Do you eat bread? These brains are excellent. The dessert! the dessert is magnificent! I shall put some of that in my bag!"

AD. "She is delirious."

SUS. "Oysters! oh, I could eat twenty dozen! Make haste! Come, come, open them quickly! Quicker, quicker! you are tiresomely slow."

AD. "Excuse her; her mind wanders."

THE PAR. "It does indeed; her little wits are wool-gathering."

AD. "Susanne, dear Susanne, hear me; it is I. Don't you know me? I am Adèle!"

SUS. "Ah, your husband is very gentlemanly."

AD. "Do not wander so wildly; here is bread, take it and eat it."

SUS. "It is for me, is it not?"

AD. "Yes, yes, it is for you."

SUS. (*She took the bread, examined it, tasted it.*)
"Pie, excellent pie, one of Lesage's make; the crust is admirable, delicious." (*She ate voraciously.*)

ONE OF THE SOL. (*to his comrade,*) "I wish I was a rich man."

THE PAR. "And so do I, were it only that I might be kind to people like these! It breaks my heart: here, come away; have you a lamp or candle that I can light for you?"

FREDERIC. "Candle! lamp! when we have not a morsel of bread in the house!"

THE PAR. "Suppose we leave them an end of candle?"

THE OTHER SOL. "Yes, do; the corporal will say nothing about it."

THE PAR. "Well, then, leave the candle end. Adieu, my friends, I trust you will be more fortunate, and see better days."

AD. "Ah, I shall never forget what you have done for me."

THE PAR. "Adieu, adieu, good luck to you until I see you again."

THE OTHER SOL. "Ah, take care of yourselves, miserable, unhappy creatures."

THE PAR. "Chut, chut, wait till we get outside."

For Adèle and her companions this was a fortunate day that was about to beam on them. The sun rose on twenty-four francs fifty-five centimes that belonged to them. What blessings did they call down on the heads of the brave fellows of the invincible Eighteenth. Adèle was hurt, crushed, by the accident of the preceding evening, but yet was so happy, because she had brought plenty to the house, that scarcely had day dawned when she began to sing. As for Susanne, her brain was no longer occupied by deceitful hallucinations. Sleep had restored her to reason, and the phantom of a splendid banquet no longer irritated her appetite, satisfied by a less seducing reality, although infinitely more solid and satisfactory.

"I remember nothing of it," said she. "What! did the soldiers do all this? For a trifle, now, I would go and kiss the captain."

AD. "And the sergeant, and the corporal, in fact, all of them behaved like deities."

FRED. "Then they may rely on it, that, go wherever I may, and meet their regiment, it will be that I have not a farthing in my pocket if I do not treat them to drink. Don't you think, Henriette, that they richly deserve a kind return for their feeling conduct."

HENRIETTE. "Yes, my dear fellow, we ought to vow a candle for their safety; but for them this day had been our finale."

CHAPTER LVII.

The kettle empty—the audience and reading *la Quotidienne*—Break your arms and legs!—Have you a curate?—Justice is there—The tall figure again—The second breakfast.

A SUM of twenty-four francs fifty-five centimes is not an inexhaustible fund, and the party, who knew it well, did all their endeavours to procure work, but there was no possibility of getting any. The eleventh day, in the morning, the kettle was again empty.

“Now,” said Frederic, “we may hang our teeth up on a hook. What do you think of it, Adèle?”

“I do not know. I have a presentiment and wish to satisfy myself on one particular point; if I do not succeed I shall have the less to reproach myself with.”

“You will not succeed. When any one is in ill luck, all exertion is useless, he may drown himself in his own spittle.”

“Be that as it may, I shall have a clear conscience.”

Adèle went out and hastened to the house of the commissary of *bienfaisance*. At the sight of the fatal bench on which she had lain in so wretched a situation, she trembled, hesitated, and almost retreated. It was not twelve of the clock, they could not refuse to introduce her. She summoned up her courage and stepped over the threshold.

“Oh! where are you going?” said the surly porter.

“To monsieur.”

“It is not the hour,—you must come again at eleven o’clock.”

Adèle did not fail to appear when the clock struck the hour.

“You may go up stairs.”

She went up, and after awaiting the delays and submitting to the impertinent curiosity of the antechamber she obtained the audience she solicited.

The commissary received her. He was seated in lounging attitude in an arm-chair, with his eyes fixed on the "Quotidienne*," an article in which made him smile.

"What do you want?" he inquired.

Adèle stated her situation and that of her friends. The picture she drew was distressing, but he did not condescend to suspend the perusal of his newspaper, and she had ceased speaking at least twenty minutes, when, throwing the journal down on a small side-table, he broke silence with this singular *aside* speech.

"Well, all things duly considered, I shall make up my mind to go to the Variétés† this evening! Oh! what you are there, woman? You say that——"

"Sir, I come to implore——"

"Yes, I see all about it. Have you any family?"

"No, sir."

"You are not sixty, I can see. Have you any infirmities?"

"No, sir."

"You are young and well; you have strong arms; what more would you have? Do you think 'the bureau de charité' will support you in idleness?"

"I am a workwoman, and ask only the means of procuring employ."

"Can we give you work?"

"Ah! sir, if I could procure any through your means; I am in the lowest depths of distress."

"If we succoured all those who come here like you, the bureau could not suffice for the multitudinous claims we have. Have you any recommendations? Do you know any body?"

"No, sir."

"Have your application backed, and then we shall see."

"But, sir, by whom shall I get it backed?"

* A newspaper so called.—TRANS.

† A theatre in Paris.—TRANS.

"Have you not a curate in your parish? It is simple enough: bring me a letter from him."

"That will take some time to do, and I am without bread."

"So much the worse for you. I cannot act otherwise."

"In the mean time what will become of me? I must turn thief, and rob some one."

"As you like; but justice is at hand. Well, you have nothing more to say to me;—good day, good day."

He then arose, and rang for his servant.

"What, do you still remain there? Did you not hear me?"

"Pardon me," stammered out Adèle, who, under the long folds of a dressing gown in which he was enveloped, thought she recognised the tall figure whose orders the policemen had obeyed. At this moment a servant entered.

"What do you please to want, sir?"

"Tell the cook to bring up my second breakfast, and make haste, for I am dying with hunger. Order the horses to be put in the carriage at three o'clock."

"Will you go to the Exchange, sir?"

"Yes; go, make haste."

Adèle was mute and motionless.

"If you look at me till this time to-morrow what benefit would it be to you? Will you compel me to turn you out by the shoulders? I tell you once more, see the clergyman of your parish."

Adèle could not make any objection; and, half indignant, half confounded, she said to the commissary, taking her leave,—“I thank you, and shall follow your advice.”

CHAPTER LVIII.

A priest should be humane—The parsonage-house—The preparations for a gala—The devotees—Curiosity—The Abbé Tatillon, or the major-domo—*Te Deum laudamus*—*Regrets à la comète*—An indiscretion—Meddle with your own affairs.

ADELE went towards the residence of the clergyman: "If I am repulsed here," she thought,—“well, I will not be repulsed: if fate rages so desperately against me, it shall not be said that my faults are of my own seeking. I will try all means of attaining success. But how to accost the clergyman? I do not go to church; he has never seen me, and perhaps will reprimand me; but he will not eat me up alive; he is a priest, priests ought to be humane, charitable; their religion tells them to be kind to every body. Then what do I ask? a letter; it costs but very little to write a letter; I would rather die than supplicate that cruel wretch the commissary again. To die! it is very cruel at my age. Once I felt the necessity of it, but never shall again. I will tell the clergyman all my misfortunes, those of my friends, he shall know all, from *Pater* to *Amen*, (from beginning to end;) and if he have the bowels of charity, if he be a Christian, he cannot help feeling compassion for our sufferings, and giving us the succour we so greatly need.”

Whilst cogitating all this over in her mind, Adèle arrived at the clergyman's residence. The porter, of whom she inquired if the pastor could be seen, pointed out to her a pavilion at the bottom of the court yard. “Enter that,” said he, “and you will find M. l'Abbé there.”

Adèle followed his directions, and after having knocked for some time, pushed the door, and saw before her a large room, where, on a sideboard shining with gold and silver, were spread out all the delicacies and dainties of terrestrial paradise. Women were bustling

about in all directions. "That will do better this way, this will do better that way. The appearance of the whole is charming, delightful! this cream is delicious! What do you think of my dish of sweetmeats?"

All the women were so busied, that she entered without being perceived.

"Now, put those plates a little in order; you spoil the look of the whole service. Mind, now; you very nearly broke my dish."

Then came the question, "What do you want here?" addressed to Adèle by a sister of *Visitation*.

"What does that woman want?" was asked in the same breath by a nun of *Sacré Cœur*.

"Does Madame want anything?" inquired a canoness, who seemed to preside over these preparations. "Demoiselle Marie, just see what the person wants."

Demoiselle Marie approached Adèle, "What is your wish, Madame?"

"I wish to have the honour of speaking to M. the vicar."

"If you have anything very particular to say to him, you can communicate it to me; it is just the same as speaking to himself; I will tell him faithfully all you have to say; is it a public or private matter that you wish to see him upon?"

"I wish to speak with him in private."

"In private, my dear! oh, we don't speak to the vicar in that way."

"Ask him in writing to give you an audience, and if he thinks proper he will reply to you, and fix a time when he can conveniently see you."

"He will reply to me to-morrow, perhaps, and then it will be too late."

"If you are so much in haste, it seems to me that you might just as well state to me what brought you hither."

"I can only tell it to the vicar."

"Ah, that is different, I have no wish to know it if I have asked you any questions, it was for your own

sake and interest; you have your secrets, madame, and pray keep them, keep them by all means, I am too good to occupy myself with you in this way."

"Since Demoiselle Marie is the superintendant of this gala," said a sister aide-de-camp, who, with fine herbs and anchovies, amused herself in drawing on the plate the instruments of the passion, "why make with her a mystery of your proceedings?"

"We all have our reasons, sister."

"Heaven protect us from seeking to penetrate yours, my dear child, it is not curiosity that induces us; we curious, indeed, oh! Jesus, no, that is not our failing: but I like better that people should clearly and properly explain themselves."

"But pray cease to solicit the lady," cried the canoness ironically, "she is not compelled to tell you every thing."

"Oh, I know what it is," replied the Demoiselle Marie, "she is some mumper: they literally swarm here, nothing but beggars to be seen; we might say that we have nothing to do but to stoop and pick them up,—alms, alms, they are not so very abundant, we have never been more pestered, and we have our own poor, and—"

"Do not put yourself so much out of the way to no purpose; you do not know what I want, and it was not to you that I addressed myself."

"Do you mark the insolent creature?"

"Proud heart and humble fortune," observed the canoness, "they are all alike."

"People ought to be humble when they are not rich," remarked the sister of Visitation.

"Nobody is more charitable than I am," said the sister of Sacré Cœur; "but I like to see people humble. Ah! humility is a fine virtue. If this lady had told us what she wanted, we might perhaps have had pleasure in lending her our assistance."

At this moment, the staff-major of this troop of gouvernantes, servants, nuns, canonesses, and devotees of all ages and all colours, surrounded the mumper:

"Tell us; intrust to us; confide in us," they cried; and a thousand other interpellations, more or less imperative, were simultaneously uttered.

"Whilst you surround me like a parcel of bailiffs," cried Adèle, who did not know amidst the multitude whom to answer, "I have nothing to tell you."

Whilst she was thus enduring the pitiless pelting of the storm of inquiries, the atmosphere was suddenly filled with the most delicious perfumes. Oh, what agreeable odour! it is exhaled from a delicate cambric handkerchief used by a young abbé, fresh and gay, who came with a candlestick in his hand, wiping his forehead.

"Pancrace, mind where you put your feet," said this major-domo to a fat fellow whose arms and loins were both wearied with the weight of forty bottles miraculously packed in a hamper.

"Take care," added the abbé, "there is a step. There, mind. Ah! now our chambertin is all right; but not without trouble, was it brother? *Te Deum laudamus.*"

"Monsieur l'Abbé, where did you take it from?" asked Demoiselle Marie, "from the bottom of the cellar?"

"Yes; the comet cellar."

"That's perfectly right."

"Do you know that it diminishes from being drunk? Ah! if it pleased the Lord to send us another star."

He drew himself up suddenly, as if surprised at the sight of a strange face; and, looking at Adèle, said—

"I do not know this lady!"

"She wants the vicar."

"The vicar. Oh! he has other fish to fry.—(*To Adèle.*)—You could not, madam, have selected your time more unpropitiously. The vicar will not be at liberty all day. We have coming to dinner, MM. de la Fabrique and the Fathers of the Mission; and you know that, at festival times, (*with an amiable air,*) we know when they begin, but cannot tell when they will

terminate. Besides, what do you want with the vicar? Are you one of his sheep?"

"I do not know, sir."

"And who knows, if you do not? Diantre, diantre? Yes, yes, (*he stammered.*) Ah! I see, I see: it is only with him that you have business; so I should not have the leisure to hear you. I have plenty of work before me. I advise you not to go out again where you entered: the vicar will be much fatigued, and glad to throw himself on his bed for a moment: then he will sit down to table——. No: upon consideration, write to him."

"That is what we have already advised madame to do," observed Mademoiselle Marie.

"Well, then," replied the abbé, "there is another way——"

"Pray, M. l'Abbé," cried the gouvernante, "meddle with your own concerns. Your way! do you think I could not have told her as well as you, if I had thought proper to do so? But you know how displeased the vicar is, when any one goes to him in the vestry."

"The vestry!" murmured Adèle, in a low voice; to whom the word was as a new light: and instantly making a courtesy, which was not returned, she went out and ran towards the church.

CHAPTER LIX.

The sacristan—Demoiselle Marie, or the pass-word—The two vicars, or the parallel—The old and the new—Well-ordered charity—The representation—Registers of the civil state—Picture of deep misery—No one dies of hunger—Malediction—A general confession—The tall figure again—Impertinent allusion—Baptism and burial—The charitable actor.

SHE soon reached the cloisters of the sanctuary, and was looking about for the vestry.

"Behind the choir to the left, you will see the inscription in gold letters," said one of the givers of holy water.

Adèle read the inscription. "It is here, then," she said, as she entered.

"Well, what do you want? where are you going so fast?" cried a man in a large black gown, whom the skull-cap on his head denoted to be one of the servitors of the temple: "is it a baptism, a marriage, a burial, masses, the holy viaticum? This is the sacrament bell."

"M. the Vicar."

"From whom?"

"The Demoiselle Marie."

"The Demoiselle Marie. Then welcome, my dear madame. You will see the vicar; but at this moment he is still *in pontificalibus*, and you must wait until he be unrobed. Pray be seated there on the seat near the window; do you see, you had better watch for his leaving the robing-room, and then you can say what you wish. Ah! the vicar is a most worthy man."

"You instil life into me."

"Generous and compassionate, how happy are those who live around him! The parish owes him much. In the first place, he has had the tabernacle and choir-window regilt. Twenty thousand francs have been expended

for that; than we are more liberally paid than by his predecessor, God have mercy on his soul. He always used to have a crowd of paupers at his heels, or idlers, worthless creatures; and for their sakes he cut down our remuneration. He would have brought us to a straw apiece; but then, to be sure, he denied himself every thing, and one should not be one's own executioner; the humblest stonemason lived better than he did. If he had dared, I think that, for their pleasure, he would willingly have gone quite naked, or nearly so; well-ordered charity begins with self, and those nearest to us. Besides, the head of the parish should represent it, but he looks like a miser; a threadbare coat, an old hat, and a surplice full of darns. One might have put a *liard* in his hand, and would not have given one for his whole suit. He was strict with us, as if the first poor were not in the church; in fact, he was a Jansenist; there was some talk of elevating him to a bishopric: I should pity the diocese he might have presided over.

“An inflammation of the chest, caught going out one night in the winter, to carry the extreme unction to a poor sick person, sent him *ad patres* (to his fathers). Well, he has not been regretted; now, all goes on well, and cannot fail to go on better and better. When we have a tabernacle of gold, and I do not despair of it, as we have already a sun, all the world will know it,—I as well as others. It is only that horrible chamber that disturbs us, or else I promise you we should soon be above our present situation.”

“What! have you too much revenue?”

“No, no; it is not that. I understand—by the help of God and the congregation, we shall contrive to get rid of that. But you are a woman, and these matters are above your understanding. Since you came from the parsonage, you must know that they are preparing a splendid feast. These gentlemen have met, and not for nothing, I am sure: they are going to deliberate, to come to a decision. There is something to be done and

managed, I know—May the Holy Spirit lend them his lights; they do not want them, I know, but they will do no harm.

“Ah! whilst we are talking, here is the vicar; if I had not watched, he would have passed. Make haste, make haste; that is he with the rosy face and large stomach. How plump! I have not misrepresented him, at all events. So he is going to the entry office; he is going to put his seal to the register of the civil state; that is another robbery they are committing on us. Do not disturb him, but as soon as he is done there will be no harm in accosting him. You will see how affable he is when any one pleases him.”

“Oh, that I may please him!” sighed Adèle, quitting the sacristan; and, that she might be in readiness to accost the vicar when he laid aside his pen, she stationed herself behind the chair in which he was seated. After having looked over a few pages, the pastor turned round, and casting on Adèle one of those looks in which the feeling of self-importance was scarcely concealed beneath an assumed benevolence:

“You have something to say to me?” he asked, in that mild tone which was acquired in the days of his apprenticeship.

“Yes, reverend sir.”

“What is it about?”

“You see before you a wretched female, who knows not where to lay her head; but what most distresses me is, that I am not alone in my misery—there are four of us. Yes, sir, four, three females and a man—all unfortunate together, with not a morsel of food to place between our lips, not the smallest particle of furniture or clothing to sell and purchase a meal’s victuals. Could you but enter the hole in which we live, you would shudder. But even now you can judge for yourself, you have evidence before your eyes; it freezes enough to pierce a stone, and, cold as it is, I have only this cotton garment, and that tattered and torn, and you see I have only my flesh and blood to walk on.”

Yes, unfortunately, I see it ; but how can I help it ? The apostles walked barefoot."

"In the name of God, sir, do not abandon me; if you refuse us aid we must perish."

"Here is another ; they think we roll in riches ; by the way they open their batteries, every one would suppose we are made of money. We are besieged, overwhelmed, stunned ; we ought to have the income of Lafitte, and that would not suffice. There is the *Comité de bienfaisance*, why don't you apply there?"

"Ah, sir, the *comité*, when I am perishing of hunger."

"That's all fudge, nobody dies of hunger in Paris !"

"Just heaven ! there is then a condition more wretched than misery ! a misery of which I had not thought."

"I do not doubt what you tell me of your situation, but no one will believe impossibilities ; besides, what are your claims to the bounties of the faithful ? I am the dispenser of them, it is true, but I must render an account of the alms I bestow. Who sent you to me ? do you take the sacraments—who is your director?"

Adèle hid her face, and was silent.

"You are silent, you do not speak ; I see how it is, you are an impious creature, an atheist, a heretic, an unbeliever !"

She attempted to speak, but the heaving sobs of her bosom prevented her.

"What answer can you make, damned soul ? It is not for you that the manna will fall from heaven."

Adèle prostrated herself at his feet, and embraced his knees, saying,

"Sir, father, I am a great sinner—I deserve all your reproaches—I have forgotten all religious duties—yes, I am culpable."

"Rise, you are devoted to Satan—I say so."

"Oh, forgive me, I will do all that you order ; I will submit to any penance you may please to inflict."

"It is time : you ask to be reconciled with the Lord,

because you have need of him. The Lord casts you off because you are accursed."

"I will pray and appease him."

"Yes, pray to him, offer up to him your afflictions, expiate by perpetual repentance the indifference in which you have lived; but as long as you are unworthy I can hope for nothing."

"Oh, misery, misery."

"You are tall, strong, well-made, why don't you work?"

"Work! I am avoided, shunned, driven out everywhere. Oh! you are right to say so! we are cursed; the curse clings to us, follows us everywhere. Why cannot I begin my life again! Coquetry should not tempt me again. When we are young, why can we not foresee what results from it! Better would it have been for me to break my neck than to have listened to the sorcery which tempted me from my paternal home! She tempted me with finery, the seducer! and I thought she meant me well! she is the cause of all: she has involved me in this abyss; but for her I never should have known the police-men—never."

She covered her eyes with her hands and continued:

"My father and mother died of grief, and I their daughter—shall I confess it?—instead of reforming, have put the copestone on my ingratitude and misconduct! Oh! I have been cruelly punished for it, and am still, although I have passed sixteen years of my life at Saint Lazare! Yes, sir, sixteen years!"

"What, have you undergone a sentence of justice? begone from me, infamous creature! you horrize me!"

"You drive me from you, you treat me like the most degraded of the human race: is it not then true that the Saviour took Mary Magdalene to his pity? is it not true that he pardoned the adulterous woman? Has there been no Vincent de Paule? The almoner of the prison, when he said that the mercy of God is inexhaustible;—no, he did not deceive us: he did not put forth a lie from that mouth so pure, and whence

issued only the words of consolation! Great and holy Vincent de Paule, you of whom he so often spoke to us; you who, to convert evil-doers, attached yourself to their chain; you, whose virtues he imitated, intercede for me. Are you not still on this earth? You would be touched by my tears, you would not repulse me!"

"Saint Vincent would do as he thought best; I do as I can, and can do nothing. I repeat to you, I can do nothing; it is very sad for you, but you understand me, therefore importune me no further."

Adèle arose.

"Hear me, sir, I conjure you.

"It is useless."

"One word, only one single word."

"This woman is insupportable! Well, what is this word? Do not keep me in suspense; you see I am sent for."

He turned towards the door, and made with his head many inclinations, accompanied with that smile full of amenity which, on a practised physiognomy, can ally itself to a contrary expression; he made also with his hand an amiable and courtier-like wave of recognition and salute.

"One moment, my dear churchwarden, the business is settled, and I follow you."

Adèle was again struck with the appearance of the tall figure, for the churchwarden was also the commissary of *bienfaisance*. Her tongue cleaved to the roof of her mouth. The vicar desired her to speak.

"Is it for to-day?"

"I am without bread!" in the midst of sobs and tears was all she could utter.

"Still the same song! You have told me so already. Now, if you would have me take any interest in you, begin by making your peace with heaven.—Endeavour to obtain remission of your sins—make a general confession, and bring me a written testimony of your having performed these acts of Catholicity—then give some

powerful and convincing proofs of your repentance—weep over your errors—detest your crimes—groan, groan and purify yourself—lay aside the blots of your evil deeds—accuse yourself of all the crimes you have been guilty of.”

“Pray, sir, do you count as nothing the confession, in some sort public, that she has just made?” interrupted one of the spectators of this scene, who, approaching Adèle, slipped into her hand a piece of money. “O God!” he cried,

Lasciate ogn’ speranza voi ch’ entrate!!!

“Is it, can it be at the gate of his temples that we should read this motto of hell?”

The vicar darted a glance (which he would fain have had a thunderbolt) at the speaker, then turning to one of the persons near him, said:—

“Did you hear what he mumbled in Latin? No doubt some impertinent allusion taken from the Holy Scriptures.”

“I beg your pardon; it is a verse of Dante’s, meaning—*You who enter here, leave all hope behind.*”

“It is an insult: it is most audacious to come to the very holy of holies, to censure our actions. Who is this polite gentleman?”

In reply to this question, the beadle, who had been admitted third man in the colloquy, presented a slip of paper—the vicar read—“*a player.*”

“Ah! that does not astonish me; an actor! a mountebank! a——. We cannot refuse baptism to his child; but as for him, I shall have my revenge, I expect, at his burial.”*

Whilst fulminating this excommunication, in an under

* In France they do not allow the ‘poor player’ to be interred in consecrated ground. The vice of his life clings to the breathless corpse, which would of course pollute the crumbling dust of holy men, who expired covered with the grease of extreme unction.—TRANS.

tone, the vicar took the arm of the churchwarden, they both disappeared, and the same carriage carried them and their anathemas away.

Adèle, stupified at all she had seen and heard, remained motionless.

"Come, take heart," said the comedian to her, "dry up your tears; there are good priests and good souls; you will find them, and Providence, moreover, is very good. You have to-day wherewith to get a dinner."

"Ah! sir, but for you——"

"Don't mention that—go and get something to eat, that is the first thing; go—(*then aside, and walking away quickly*)—Abominable prejudice! poor woman! I regret almost not having taken her for a god-mother."

The friends of Adèle longed for her return, and she entered, throwing down a twenty-franc piece, "Here it is."

"A yellow-boy!"

"Yes! ah, he was a good man who gave it to me, an actor."

"An actor?"

"I will tell you all about it: in the mean while go for something to eat. Oh! my friends, the commissary of bienfaisance, the vicar, the devotees, what a set! what hearts! It is useless talking about them. We must be thrifty, however, and live close, for the vicar is not the man to give us any more when this is gone and spent. We will first go and take a snap at an eating-house, to prevent death from walking off with any of us: a sheep's head and some vegetable soup; that's the bill of fare, do you see? and after that we will return."

This repast, so modest and moderate, was soon terminated; they then went to the market-place, where they bought two sacks of potatoes and some other vegetables; fifteen francs were thus expended; thus, as far as appetite was concerned, they had provision for nearly a month.

CHAPTER LX.

The month too soon passed away—Visit to benefactors—They have gone—The mourning coaches—The attendants on funerals—The apostrophes—The lackeys—The chapel—We owe truth to the dead—The director of the quadrilles—The plain of Virtues—The drum beats—Atrocious jestings—A brawl—The excommunicant—God! it is he—Is it a vision?—The vanities of an impious creature—The funeral-knell—The two folding-doors—The clergy—The corners of the pall—The tall figure appears again—Hatred of the world.

THE month glided away but too rapidly; it expired before the termination of the dead season. The party, after having in vain tramped up and down soliciting employ, saw themselves again threatened by famine. It was the end of March.

“Thirty-one, and now a day without bread, distress in the land,” such were the first words which the locksmith uttered on awaking.

“Oh, fate, that deprived me of my father!” cried Susanne.

“’Tis but too true, empty cupboard and empty stomachs,” sighed her sister.

“Yes,” returned Frederic, “we have returned to the point from which we started yesterday month, day for day. If *Mameselle* Adèle could but meet again some one of the invincibles of the eighteenth, who are such good fellows, or only that worthy actor!”

“Oh, I cannot anticipate any such luck as that; I shall rather stumble over some stone, and break my neck.”

“But yet it is you, Mam’selle, who have always had the best luck, and extricated us from our embarrassments. I am sure that if you would reflect a little on the best way of going to work, you would not return empty-handed.”

“Days follow each other, but bear no similarity, and I have no idea which way or how to betake myself.”

“Why throw the handle away after the blade? You have been seasonably inspired, and why may not that again occur?”

“What would you have me do?”

“The officer and the soldiers who saved our lives, the worthy player who was so generous—they are not dead.”

“Yes, but where can I go to seek them? The soldiers, perhaps, I might find; but as for the comedian, I do not know his name, and to go in search of him would be seeking for a needle in a bottle of hay.”

“You know his parish?”

“I do, my friends, certainly; you are right. I must find them out, there is no other hope or resource for me; I must find them, and they will not allow us to perish.”

“Well, I like that.”

Adèle was not long in preparing herself; she ran, quite out of breath, to the barracks, and then learnt that the regiment had been ordered away the previous evening. This information fell on her like a thunderbolt, for then her sole remaining hope was in discovering the abode of the comedian, her last benefactor. Sombre, pensive, and agitated by divers presentiments, she calculated the fatal and inevitable consequences of a new disappointment. A noise, of which she did not know the cause, was the first thing that aroused her from her reverie. A long train of mourning coaches were advancing slowly, at the head of which, drawn by four horses, covered with plumes and decorated housings, was the funeral car, completely covered with trophies. Twenty-four carriages followed closely after.

It could be only for some grandee that all these pompous decorations and imposing show could be produced. Adèle remembered that, on these occasions, the vanity of the relatives of the deceased purchased by alms the regrets of the poor, whom the dead never knew when living. “There will be mourners,” she said to herself, “I will be of the number, and they will pay me.”

In this persuasion she preceded the car, and soon perceived, on the front of a large house those lugubrious suits of hangings, &c., the profusion of which betokened the opulence of the owner who has just left them. Not far off was a groupe of ill-dressed persons, both men and women, who paraded the street, some beating with their feet, others striking their breasts vehemently with their hands; others again, to warm themselves in another way, were swallowing down, at the nearest public-house, that glass of *consolation*, according to the usual custom under these circumstances made and provided.

Adèle's was a new face to them; she had not yet opened her mouth, yet not one of them was mistaken as to her intentions; she gave them umbrage, and without having in any way conspired against her previously, they all united to drive her away.

"Do not hurry yourself so much," cried one of the mendicants, "we are complete in number."

"Where is this 'ere voman a coming to?" said a half-drunken creature of the female sex, attempting to block her progress.

Then came a fish-wife of the true Billingsgate cut.

"I say my young 'un, be off with your hungry phiz; the three livres, the grub, and the lush, are not for you, my lady, they will go out of your reach; if you wants to come in time you should get up sooner in the morning. Oh, my tidy vun, you wants a yard o' crape, I suppose, to make you look as you should; give her vat she wants, of course! Bah! is she down in the list to have the black clothes and things?"

"Oh, yes," said another; "Madame wants to be very fine; she don't care much for the frippery, but she wants the blunt."

In spite of these apostrophes, Adèle went on her way, and passing the porter's lodge without being perceived, directed her steps to a sort of open peristyle, under which was a troop of lackeys, some talking in a loud voice, others playing at cards, whilst at some

paces distance, under the vestibule, transformed into a temporary chapel, two priests were at vigils near the coffin, reciting the litanies of the dead.

"Well, it is a club?"

"Who marks?"

"You."

"I collect and deal the cards."

"Give them to me to shuffle."

"I demand four."

"Are you content?"

"I demand again."

"My lads, we must drink to-day; they drink well, they have drank well that——."

"Chut, chut."

"Do they hear us?"

"Don't you see that one of them is asleep? How he snores!"

"He is playing the serpent a little, whilst the other says his prayers."

"It is the accompaniment?"

"Yes, the bagpipe drone."

"I don't care who comes; I have done well, for I have got hold of the keys of the cellar, and that's the main thing."

"And I those of the larder."

"Oh! we'll go, and have a feast then, there's no reason why we should not. What say you, *Chasseur*?"

"Me! I am like the coachman, only make me the least sign, and, by Jove, if we do not take care of ourselves, there is nobody to take care of us; and then, you know, we don't bury a duke every day in the week. He plagued and worried himself enough when living, and we should rejoice and comfort ourselves a little after his death."

The *Miserere mei Deus* was heard.

"Is that a pipe bursting? I say, my boys, the other is waking: listen, he has got something in his throat, he would rather have a bottle of Burgundy."

“Good heavens, what a horrid smell! Don't you find it so? Has any gentleman in company got a snuff-box?”

“Here, I have one.”

“Will you make use of it?”

“He is already in a state of putrefaction.”

“That is no wonder; for he led such an irregular, dissipated life.”

“They say he died of having taken cantharides.”

“Vy, he's dead enough, no doubt on't. These here rich fellows thinks they may just do as they likes. They even has little things o' girls brought to 'em not ten years old—little babies almost. Vy, it makes vou's hair stand on end to think o' sich things.”

“Ah! he seduced many a one who, but for him, would never have been any thing but virtuous. What a shame! quite a disgrace. These sort of men are the pest of society.”

“They are so vicious, these debauched great men, that when all means of satisfying their desires have left them, they are still devoted to their passions. Don't you remember when you drove him to his house at Mont Rouge, that he left you on the road with your carriage? It makes one shudder to think of the horrors they did with father ——— what's his name? The name is no consequence; but if I had any thing to do in the government, I would burn alive such monsters as these. They deserve any death.”

“Yes; but that did not hinder him from taking the sacrament (*manger le bon Dieu*) every Sunday, and carrying a wax-light in the procession.”

“If that takes him to heaven: but when will they come for the body? I think they are very slow about it. Chasseur, go and see if they are on the road. Quick, quick, here are the mutes.”

At this signal, the bevy of valets dispersed. *Fare thee well, Monsieur le Comte. Adieu, Monsieur le Marquis. Good day, duke: we shall meet again by and by, my dear ambassador. Chevalier, in the afternoon let me see you again.*

Such were the parting salutes and the speeches, accompanied by shakings of hands and many flourishing compliments, of these gentlemen's gentlemen on parting with each other.

Adèle, who, on pushing open the door, had entered without being observed by these gentry, had not even dared to breathe hard, lest she should draw down upon herself some rebuff for her untimely and impertinent interruption. Concealed by a corner of the pall, the jest and joke and play of these liveried puppies having ceased, she appeared suddenly amongst them like an apparition.

"Where did she come from? Did she fall from the clouds?"

"Mind, mind, what do you want here?"

Each looked at her as if something marvellous had happened. Many spoke to her as they passed by, but no one awaited to hear her reply to the question they put to her. To see the precipitation with which they raised the siege, it might have been supposed that a pulk of Cossacks had been surprised in their bivouac by a French avant-guard. They were flitting about like shadows, appearing and disappearing.

Adèle went from one to the other, and said, in the most supplicating tone,—

"Monsieur ——"

"I have not time," said the passer by; who pushed her rudely to convince himself that she had a real body.

"Monsieur ——"

"I don't belong to the house."

"Monsieur le Chasseur, to whom do the poor apply?"

"The poor? I don't know. Ask that lad." (*The lad was a jockey boy.*)

"My little fellow, who has charge of the distribution?"

"Monsieur Euler, this woman asks who has charge of the distribution?"

Monsieur Euler was the Swiss.

“ Oh ! there is not much trouble in finding that out. Follow that gentleman with a plume in his hat on the steps there, with white shoes and a black cloak.”

“ The gentleman with the ruff and the sword ?”

“ Yes ; the master of the ceremonies.”

“ Yes ; the director of the quadrille figures,” said a negro, striking the porter on the shoulder.

“ Hold your tongue, you saucy fellow—you ebony-faced gentleman. Ah ! the quadrilles are pretty things. Go, woman ; you can’t make any mistake : that man who is now moving away—who looks very grand, as grand as the pope’s almoner.”

“ I am much obliged to you, gentlemen.”

Adèle approached the arranger of funeral ceremonies, and told him, in two words, the object of her request.

“ Your name ?” said he, drawing a list from his pocket.

“ Adèle d’Escars.”

“ You are not down here in my list : are you only amongst the petitioners ? Have you been to the administration ?”

“ No ; but I am as poor as it is possible to be.”

“ That I can’t help. Are you entered ? Do you belong to the establishment ?”

“ No, sir.”

“ Well, then, what can you expect ? The administration supplies the poor, supplies the cloth, supplies the torches, the administration supplies every thing.”

“ I see it but too well, there is nothing here for me,” sighed Adèle ; and she was about to retire, but the crowd blocked up the passages, and, without power to advance or recede, she was fixed in the centre of a groupe, the divers parties composing which pronounced these singular panegyrics :—

“ Well, at last, thank God, they are going to bury this ——”

“ He deserves no more honour than a dog.”

“ They say he has left ten thousand francs to the poor.”

" Oh ! much use they will be when they pass through so many hands."

" They call it a gift, but it's only a restitution : he will never give them as much as he has robbed them of."

" Did he never rob them in his life-time ? Did he never drive them to beggary ? a hard-hearted brute : he would not care if you had dropped dead at his feet. If all the persons he has made unhappy were present, they would reach from hence to Pontoise !"

" He was a perfect weather-cock ; sometimes red, sometimes white."

" It is such chamelions that borrow colours : who serve God and devil, and betray them both."

" They say he refused a confessor, and yet he was a hypocrite."

" A hypocrite ! oh ! that answered his purpose ; but he felt his end approaching, and as there was nothing to be gained by feigning any longer, he threw off the mask. I hope that he made amends for his false oaths."

" Suppose he had recovered, would they have made a peer of him ?"

" I will answer for that : but now they will pronounce over his tomb an eulogistic discourse of the most brilliant kind."

" All lies ; and I will wager that they will talk about his faith."

" And on the inscription we shall have it in large letters ! The marble is like paper, and bears every thing."

" *Père la Chaise** is the plain of virtues."

" The plain of virtues ! yes, to those whose pyramids point to heaven. But we poor devils ! they carry us to the common ditch ; a lump of earth, and all is said ; neither seen nor known, we leave no trace behind us."

* *Père la Chaise* is a celebrated cemetery in the immediate vicinity of Paris, where many celebrated persons have been interred, and whence many album-writers have collected epitaphs.—TRANSL.

"But we leave regrets, and that is better and besides, we have never injured any person."

"That I agree to: but yet, it may be a weakness, but I don't like to be thrown in the great hole."

"Why, what consequence is it when once I have ceased to be? They may do with me as they will, fling me in any place, cast me in the first hole."

"I am of this gentleman's opinion, and don't mind what's done to me a wink of the eye. To be sure this duke will have a monument; but it will be of frail material at best, and even if it were a diamond, what avails it."

"Listen, the drum beats."

"What! will there be any soldiers?"

"See! they are the veterans."

"The same that shot the *maréchal*!"

"The Moskwa! the *brave des braves*!"

"Yes, Ney. They did not, however, sentence him."

"I know it: they all wept like children."

"How droll they charge arms."

"Don't you see that it is to pay honours?"

There was a dull roll, which announced the moment for the procession to move.

"Come, poor, to your stations," said the master of the ceremonies.

The march began, and the crowd of assistants mixed in the procession.

Adèle, with a bursting heart, went away from the crowd of mendicants, whose satisfaction at seeing a rival defeated testified itself by a satanic burst of laughter. Forgetful of the duty prescribed to them, these privileged wretches of the funeral magnificence trampled and made a great noise with their feet: they all agitated themselves with most horrible contortions, shaking their torches, which they soon contrived to extinguish that they might get the greater profit from them. Their joy was atrocious, it was like that which the devils in hell feel at the torments of a condemned reprobate and sinner. Adèle, whom they abused, redoubled her pace, without daring to cast a look behind her.

"She has had her allowance," roared out one of the furies who had saluted her when she came.

"That's plain enough," said another, "but she wouldn't believe us."

"But she has got served out for it," observed a third.

"What, here you are," shouted out another fury, "little Mother Spider, with your throat dry, and your eyes shut."

At this direct attack, Adèle, who till then had patiently endured the gross railleries of these women, turned round with a sort of dignity.

"Oh, that's mighty grand, my princess," cried out several voices.

"Take care of yourself," cried the men.

Pushed about, she attempted to expostulate, but an old man approaching her, said, "You are only getting yourself into fresh difficulties with such blackguards as these; the best way is to treat them with silent contempt. Do you not see that they are but feigned paupers?"

"Yes," said a passer by, "but they are real miscreants."

"And, moreover, downright drunkards," added one of the soldiers, "we know that well enough."

At the height of adversity there is not light so feeble that does not shine like a lighthouse of safety. Adèle still clung to the illusion, that she should discover the player who had already extended to her the hand of succour. This hope transported her; she went again to the church; she walked through the churchyard, hoping to find some person who could tell her the house of her benefactor.

"Don't make any disturbance."

"What do you mean?"

"He shall enter."

"He shall not enter."

"Blows with a halbert? that's too much."

"Down with the gendarmes, down with them."

"Hold your tongue, unless you would have your brains knocked out."

"It is a shame, a disgrace."

"Because he is an actor."

"Is not an actor as good a man as another."

"Because they are excommunicated, they cannot be interred in holy ground."

"Hold your tongue, you excommunicatists!"

"They only had to refuse the consecrated bread when he offered it."

"And then, when he had his child baptized, they did not take his money, perhaps?"

"God! it is he!"

Anguish produced this exclamation from Adèle. Staggering, bewildered, she attempted to go some steps forward; the vociferations ceased, the tumult was appeased, swords leap from their scabbards, the horsemen mounted, and, under the escort of a troop, the hearse was taken away.

With an eye dry and dim, Adèle gazed at it as it departed. She could not shed a tear. It was all a desert around her, all had fled, all was dissipated. The circle grew larger, the buildings themselves, moving on their bases, seemed to reach the confines of the immense horizon. Adèle was oppressed, the silence of nothingness weighed on her soul like the massive pressure of a horrible nightmare; the earth turned with her, and she moved in it—was it a vision of death she saw? The toll of the bell was heard—it was the knell, the dreadful knell—the vision ceased—that which had fled returned. The doors turned on their massive hinges, and were thrown wide open. In the long perspective of unusual mourning were displayed the vanities of the atheist; the temple was converted into a sepulchre, the mortuary veil extends on all sides the galleries, the confessionals, the consecrated elements, the worship of the divine Lord of all, his pulpit of truth, his altar, his altars, his saints—the curtain of pride covers all. On a black trestle armorial bearings, escutcheons, cyphers, devices, and ornaments of silver, were seen vacillating, as do the stars of the expansive heavens in a night of

darkness. The coffin stopped—the cross was elevated, and then appeared all the clergy of the parish, priests, deacons, sub-deacons, having at their head the vicar and his curates. The corpse was laid down, the choristers and chanters began the lamentations of *Dies iræ*. Three friends of the deceased pressed forward to take the ends of the pall; a fourth advances—they salute him with deference—they give way to him; this person, before whom all bow with so much respect, is—the tall figure again! Adèle recognised him, and said,

“It is too much! everywhere I meet him, and everywhere honour is paid him. This world is all deception—a lie—an injustice! I abhor the world—I detest it—I execrate it!———”

CHAPTER LXI.

A rambling brain—Despair—The charcoal-vender—A surprise—Every one for himself—There is no longer a God—Final determination—The closed door—Precaution—The chafing-dish—Unanimity—Mind the bomb—Conscience—The mouth utters, but the heart has no participation—An “affair”—The life of the holy.

THE sentiment of hatred which Adèle vowed against the whole human race could not reach a higher state of concentration; one degree more, and it would have amounted to frenzy. Exasperated and almost furious, she ran along the streets, the squares, and thoroughfares; she walked on without aim, object, or intent; and before she had any thoughts of returning thither found herself in her own quarter of the city. She was at her own door, and was going in, but, as if struck by a sudden thought or reflection, she returned on her steps, entered a shop, and coming out again, instantly went direct to her lodging.

Susanne, who was on the watch for her return, saw that she was in a most extraordinary state of mind, went to meet her, and began questioning her with much anxiety. Adèle passed her hastily without making any reply, walked across the room without looking at any one, and going towards the window, seized the iron bars with a convulsive movement, groaned, sighed, stamped her foot on the ground, and tore her hair.

SUSANNE. “What is it, Adèle? you frighten us all!”

FRED. “What the devil has come to her? she roars like a bull.”

A CHARCOAL-VENDER (*pushing the door*). “Is this the place where they ordered the charcoal?”

ADELE (*angrily*). “Yes; place it there. You are paid.”

CHAR.-VEN. “Well, I didn’t say I wasn’t. I have brought you a light too, as you desired me.”

AD. “That’s right. You may go.”

CHAR.-VEN. "There are two bushels, good measure, do you see? If you should want any thing else —"

AD. "Why repeat all that? I want nothing more."

CHAR.-VEN. (*going away.*) "Well, she's not over-pleased about something. You got out o'bed the wrong side uppermost this morning I think, my lady."

HEN. "I can't tell what ails her. I never saw her so before. She is like a mad woman."

SUS. "When will you please to speak? If you are in a bad humour, can we do anything? What is this charcoal for?"

AD. "Why, it's charcoal, don't you see?"

SUS. "Then you have something to cook?"

AD. "No, I have nothing."

SUS. "Well, then, you must be crazy!"

HEN. "Some one has sold her peas too hard to shell."

AD. (*interrupting her abruptly.*) "No one has sold me anything."

FRED. "Leave her alone; when the fit has left her, I know she'll speak more than we shall care to hear. I will lay a wager that presently she'll talk away in good style."

HEN. "She has a surprise in store for us."

AD. (*throwing her arms about wildly.*) "A surprise? yes, I have one in store for you!"

HEN. "Then don't try to break or distort your limbs. You make me shudder from head to foot."

AD. "What is a shudder?—nothing!"

SUS. "She has lost her wits; her head's turned."

AD. "No, it is not turned: here is my head—here"—(*taking it in her hands.*)

FRED. "All that will not find us in dinner."

AD. "Hear me!"

FRED. "Well, don't I hear you; if you have a crust to eat, why not say so?"

AD. "No, no; once more I tell you, you have nothing to look for or expect."

SUS. "But this charcoal—it is that which puzzles me. We cannot eat charcoal."

AD. "Listen to me, Susanne! Listen, my friends all! I have all my senses perfectly, as well as you have them; and my determination is made. I will suffer no longer. It is not existing to live as we do. I had forty sous left; I kept them concealed; I had my motives for so doing. The moment has arrived. This is the use I intend to make of it."

SUS. "Charcoal!—instead of buying bread?"

AD. "Bread!—that would only be to protract life uselessly.—No, my friends—I am weary of life! If you are like me, I know what we will do."

FRED. "Say, what?"

AD. "We will light the brasier."

SUS. "Well, what then?"

AD. "When it has become sufficiently hot, we will shut the door, close up all the entrances and openings, and place it in the middle of the room."

HEN. (*weeping.*) "What! would you have us all perish?"

SUS. "Shall we see each other die?"

FRED. "Don't snivel, you women;—Ma'amselle Adèle is right; that is the only thing left to us. You may believe me or not as you like, ma'amselle, I have a hundred times thought of proposing it to you, but I have always found you so courageous, that I have said to myself, this should never come from a man. Now you make the proposition to me, and I will not refuse to join you. But each for himself; we do not compel others; every body is a free agent."

HEN. "You too!—how could such ideas enter your head?"

FRED. "I'faith, when there is no longer any hope—I went to the scavenger, and offered myself as a sweeper, raker of kennels; I went to the 'spice islands' (*fosses inodores*), but there was no room for

me; no work, however dirty, that I have not solicited, sued for, even to offer myself at Montfaucon and the knackers, to work at half-price; I learnt that there was a white lead manufactory at Clichy, where the workmen died like flies! well, to get admission there, they asked me for certificates. In the same way, at the glass manufactory, to be qualified to poison oneself by the vapour of mercury, you must have protectives. They told me I might get employment on the port as a ship breaker; or on the canal, wheeling the barrow for the navigators, and I did not succeed there better than any where else. It is shocking to see the number of persons applying for work daily. At the Hotel Dieu, the Val-de-Grâce, where there is an infirmarium-keeper to replace, they would not receive me, because I was not recommended by a medical man. They told me that the executioner at Versailles wanted an assistant ——"

HEN. (*with a movement of horror.*) "And did you offer yourself?"

FRED. "Quiet yourself, I have not even thought of such a thing—but only to prove how difficult it is to get any employment, there were actually more than three hundred applicants for the situation—and I am quite certain that they would not take a discharged prisoner. There were plenty to choose from, so if it had tempted me, I should have been ashamed of myself—when we are reduced to that!——"

HEN. "Ah! that comforts me."

SUS. "And me too."

AD. "I feared."

FRED. "I an executioner's helper! You should know me, ma'amselle Adèle. Any other profession, I do not say—But rather than mount in that way I would scrape the puddles. Well, only yesterday and no later, I had hopes that I should get employment with those who draw the wood sledges. Well, this morning I went to see about it—some one else had got the berth—so I was once again floored."

HEN. "Good Heavens! it is sometimes when least expected, that the water comes to the mill."

FRED. "Oh, as to that, it's all chance; but with us, when we are born under an inauspicious star, it is in vain for us to contend against it. It is only ma'am-selle Adèle who has discovered the remedy."

HEN. "To destroy oneself! Her remedy is a desperate, an useless one."

SUS. "Let her kill herself if she will, she was well put to it to put such a notion into his head."

FRED. "What will become of you? Susanne, I particularly ask what will become of you?"

SUS. "I do not know, but—"

FRED. "I believe so, they promised you some stockings to mend; you would have earned a few sous; we have lived on in hopes of getting them; when you went to seek for them, what did they say to you? that you had been you know where, and they would not trust you with them."

SUS. "What a misfortune!"

HEN. "Let each of us get a basket and go and sell it."

FRED. "Sell what? To get yourself taken up—have you a permit? We must buy it, and where's the money to get the goods to sell, if it were nothing but tinder; what do you think you would get? Not as much as the hair of my beard."

SUS. "I have a great mind to propose myself in the posting bills, although it should only be as nurse to a child."

FRED. "The posting bills! Still obstacles, unless you can carry them half-a-crown; and then, dressed as you are, what master or mistress would take you into their family? Suppose even that they were to take you, why, sooner or later, they would learn who you were, and what you had been, and if there were any robbery in the house, whom would they accuse? Susanne of course; and other persons may and will steal with impunity when a discharged convict is in the

house, for all the imputation is cast of course on them: the more I reflect, the more fully I am convinced that it is best for you as well as for me.—It is finishing our torments.”

SUS. “He will not be turned from his intentions.—Oh, how much better would it have been had I allowed her to fling herself into the water!”

HEN. “If you had not persuaded her to give up the idea of drowning herself—it was nothing to her, only a yes, or a no.”

AD. “Yes—it costs me something—it does, and I should lie were I to say otherwise—nothing is dearer to us than existence, and how I have clung to it; what I have done to prolong it should testify for me, having suffered all I have suffered. What resource have you that I have not? If you were younger, I would say to you, cling to life and get it as a fate, a lottery.—You have an example before your eyes.—I have been handsome, I may say it without flattery, and whither has my beauty led me? When we are advanced in life, there can be nothing to hesitate about. Would you prefer dying of hunger? Remember the night of the soldiers, and all that you then endured—Now there are no soldiers.”

SUS. “No soldiers!”

AD. “They have gone.”

HEN. “And the comedian?”

AD. “You must seek him in his coffin.”

HEN. “Is he dead?”

AD. “I was at the church when they refused admittance to his body.”

FRED. “You hear what she says, my dears.—You see, Henriette—there is no actor, no soldiers for us.”

AD. “There is no more well doing; there is no more humanity; there is no more religion; there is no more God.”

SUS. “Say not so, Adèle. Would you draw down his malediction on us?”

AD. “His malediction!—How long, I would ask you, has it not fallen on us? But now I mock at it.”

HEN. "Do not blaspheme, lest he should punish us."

AD. "Well, are we not punished beforehand? Why make yourself uneasy? Our hell has commenced."

FRED. "Let us make haste, or else the fire will go out."

AD. (*putting the fire on the charcoal, and blowing it.*) "Never fear, it is burning up again. I will light it very speedily. Are you resolved?"

SUS. "It will stifle us!—Help! Oh, wretches that we are—Henriette, take the bellows from her."

HEN. (*weeping, shrieking loudly and sobbing by turns*) "Murder, guard.—They are trying to kill us.—Ah! how am I to be pitied—Oh Lord Jesus, have mercy upon us! Good God! Good Lord! Oh, Saviour!"

FRED. (*darting towards the door, which was ajar, closed it, and turning it on the double lock, put the key in his pocket.*) "Now, cry as long as you like. With their lamentations they will call up the neighbours. The women, the women, they can do nothing with the women. I ask your pardon, ma'amselle Adèle, it is not you I mean, but these poor chicken-hearted things, who can only cry and do nothing else; and, parbleu! Death! why it is not swallowing the sea. Death—when one is dead!—"

HEN. (*throwing herself on Frederic's neck, whilst Susanne, who had seized his hands, bathed them with tears.*) "Frederic, dearest Frederic, I beseech you, am not I your Henriette?"

FRED. "What would you have me say?"

HEN. "Could you have the courage to see me die before your eyes?"

FRED. (*with emotion, and making an effort to get rid of his feelings.*) "Oh, leave me. I cannot say anything."

HEN. "Would you see my corpse?"

FRED. "That would hurt me!"

HEN. "You turn away your face—you do not answer me—look at me, dearest."

FRED. (*with feeling.*) "Well!"

AD. (*apart.*) "They will overpower him. How much do I regret that I did not do this alone!"

HEN. (*embracing Frederic.*) "You will not die, will you?"

FRED. "How can I resist her? oh, woman, woman! when a man loves! I consent to every thing, we will not die."

AD. "And bread?"

FRED. "We will have some. You have heard of Vidocq's band?"

AD. "But too much."

FRED. "I have the option of entering it: I shall have three francs a day, and we will share them."

HEN. "And you will be —— Oh! dear Frederic, let us die. I propose it now."

SUS. "And I do not oppose it."

HEN. "We will die together in each other's arms; at least, I shall be sure that, after me, Frederic will belong to no one else."

SUS. "Now, Adèle, you are content?"

AD. "Yes, I am."

FRED. "How inflexible she is! she does not change from her purpose—the gulf must be leaped, and the sooner that is done, the sooner will our embarrassments terminate."

HEN. (*blowing the charcoal.*) "How slow it is to light!"

AD. "Blow, blow, it will soon kindle."

FRED. "Don't set the place on fire, for we are not in our own house, and there are children up stairs."

HEN. "Poor little dears, we must not burn them."

AD. "It would be doing them a service perhaps."

SUS. "There are enough of us, four persons, that is not often the case. It will be mentioned in the papers."

FRED. "They will insert it in the journals."

AD. "We shall be a theme of conversation in Paris, and that will be a vast consolation."

HEN. "Perhaps it may be of service to others, who knows?"

AD. "All the charcoal is in flame."

SUS. "We might roast an ox. And is this then our last day?"

AD. "Ah! that is not all. You do not look, they may see us from opposite, we must put the quilt against the window."

FRED. "That is useless, there are only the masons there, they are on the roof, which is very high; besides, I think it is their dinner hour, and before they return ——"

HEN. "It will be all over with us. We must stop up the chimney."

AD. "Most assuredly."

HEN. (*placing the quilt there.*) "Frederic, I have a favour to ask of you."

FRED. "What is it?"

HEN. (*lifting up an handiron.*) "A woman is never so strong as a man, she has not the same strength of mind! I mistrust myself; you see this handiron.— If I should change my mind, (*squeezing his hand affectionately*) you understand me ——"

FRED. "*I do, I do!* Horrible situation!"

SUS. "All is ready, what must we do?"

AD. "Nothing, but lie down and await." (*She threw herself on the floor; Susanne, Henriette, and Frederic followed her example, the two latter embracing.*)

SUS. "Death, death! If I cover my face, I think I should have less fear. I cannot *see* it come." (*She covers herself with a handkerchief.*)

HEN. "Frederic, put my apron over my eyes, the sight is fearful to me."

AD. "I will gaze on it to the last."

HEN. "I cannot draw my breath."

SUS. "My stomach swells. I am suffocating."

AD. "And I too, my head whirls."

HEN. "My brain seems to boil."

SUS. "Do you feel as I do, in a cold perspiration, and sick, oh, so sick?"

AD. "I have a tight bandage over my brows, and a weight oppresses my limbs."

FRED. "It is strange, but I feel nothing uncommon. It is, perhaps, the effect of habit."

AD. "My vision is disturbed. A cloth seems to pass over my eyes, they swell, I am giddy to excess."

SUS. "What an oppression!"

FRED. "Well, then, I must be made of iron."

AD. "My blood freezes."

FRED. "And I shall survive them!"

HEN. "Frederic, my own Frederic, my heart is bursting! Oh, what pain; it tears my breast open; take away that serpent that gnaws my heart; where do you carry me? Who lifts me? Is it you? I am better now. I am well. Ah! how delightful! I am light. I am in paradise. Adieu, Frederic! my friends, pray for me."

AD. "My head!—what an insupportable weight!—my heart! I can hear it beat!—it beats!—it swells!—what a brilliant sight!—the sun shines!—what a beautiful light! Ah! they are thrusting needles into my breast. Frederic, do you hear a buzzing sound? It is there at my ear."

SUS. (*contracting her muscles, and beating on the floor.*) "They will break the drum of my ear with their hammer; cruel, cruel creatures! they tear my bosom—they are quiet—'tis well, 'tis well! Ah, am I here, then is my soul made perfect!—a cloud—it passes—it is extinguished—it escapes me—I cannot retain it—mercy, great God, mercy."

FRED. "Henriette! Henriette! (*shaking her*) she is no more, and I!—Her teeth are clenched—How white they are!—Henriette, dear Henriette, do you not hear me? Oh! that I had a pistol, some weapon. (*He rose quickly, and opening a drawer, took out a knife.*) Thank God! I can join them now—I can stab myself! there, on her body—my blood shall flow! between these

two ribs.—It beats here: does hers beat still? (*He kissed her, and placed his hand upon her heart.*) No—(*he embraced her, and placing the blade against his heart*)—now let me hope that my hand fail me not.”

He was about to give the deadly thrust—a noise was heard—*Mind, mind below, mind the bomb!* The knife falls from his hand, the window was burst open with great noise, the broken glass flew about the room: “*Quarante-cinq**,” (forty-five) cried out, in unison with the shock, some voice in the neighbourhood; and whilst, from the top of a ladder, on which was perched a mason, this cry of consolation arose in the air: “*As many killed as wounded, and not one dead,*” an enormous piece of plaster and rubbish, projected like an avalanche down the slope of the roof, fell at Frederic’s feet.

“Well,” said he, “does the devil mingle with the dance? (*Then looking at Henriette.*) She is happy!”

However, by the sudden irruption, the air circulated in the room, the brazier no longer threw out its blue flame, the north wind, which came in with violence, made the charcoal crackle, a spark was driven on Henriette’s hand, she made a movement, and, almost at the same instant, a sort of rattling in the throat, more quick than that of the last pang, announced that life was not extinct in her companions. It was the dilating of their lungs, it was respiration resuming its course, and they were reanimating like withered flowers after the morning’s dew.

“Henriette, dear Henriette, speak to me, love! (*Taking her in his arms he placed her on a seat.*) Speak to me.”

* In Paris, when they break a window, the common people cry out “*quarante-cinq*,” so as to produce a sound, in a measure harmonizing with the accident. It is to them a capital joke, because *quarante-cinq*, (45) is written with the two figures that make “*neuf*” (that is, in French, either *nine* or *new*). The pun is ingenious.

Henriette was slowly reviving, her mouth was half opened : at last her eyelid was raised, but beneath the light of day, which dazzled her, it speedily closed again.

"Dearest Henriette," said Frederic again, "it is I, don't you know Frederic?—it is your husband."

The purple tints which were shed over the countenance of Henriette disappeared. "Ah!" said she, (the words expiring on her lips) in a sepulchral tone, "the storm is over—how it thundered!"—and then, recovering herself a little, "Frederic, is it you? It does not thunder now, does it? The cold—ah! how cold, very, very cold: my feet are like icicles; chafe them, I am so cold. Shut the window . . . are you mad? What fire is this?"

As well as being astonished at what she experienced, Henriette was not in a condition to attach the least remembrance of what she saw. Adèle and Susanne, who had recovered more speedily, gazed with dry and lack-lustre eyes on the brazier by which they were lying.

AD. "Is it possible? You see we cannot die though we wish it."

SUS. "Heaven is a witness . . ."

FRED. "Our hour was not come."

AD. "We must think so. A dog would die sooner."

SUS. "A mother who wrongs her children."

FRED. "We leave none behind us—no brats."

HEN. "Seeds of misery! That would have completed our wretchedness."

FRED. "Well, we're advanced very far, certainly. What has been the use of all these precautions?"

AD. "Don't say a word about it to me, I am in rage."

FRED. "The charcoal is lost."

AD. "Lost, say you! No, no, it is not lost: it will not kill us; let us make it give us life."

FRED. "What do you mean."

AD. "Let us forge some keys,—we will do as others do."

SUS. "Speak lower, girl, do: if any person heard us!"

AD. "Let them hear or not hear, what matters it? If we are denounced, well, they will take us before the judge, there will only be this; if all the world did right, the judges would have nothing to do. Come, come, henceforward I will not be such a fool as to endure hunger: the good shall suffer for the bad, so much the worse for those on whom it may fall: they will not give us, they will not allow us to earn, then we must take. Since they compel us, since they will not let us be honest, I will become the greatest thief that the earth has on its surface. If they catch me, the fall will be at the end of the ditch: I shall still have had some agreeable moments. Now, I do not know myself any longer; it seems to me that at present, I should make no more scruple of cutting a man's throat than of wringing the neck of a chicken."

HEN. "Don't say so, Adèle, it is offending God. It is against conscience."

AD. "God! God! He would not have given us a conscience to make us die of hunger.—God! I renounce him. Conscience! what is conscience? Have, then, your *conscience*, your probity; you have experienced its worth; it is fine, very fine!"

FRED. "Do you know, ma'amselle Adèle, that it is not right to use such language. I am not pleased with you now. But if you wish us to die I am no longer agreeable."

SUS. "Oh, she is not so wicked any longer; what she says falls from her lips, but does not come from her heart."

HEN. "It is anger, but far from her real feelings."

AD. "True, true, we will kill no person. But hear me; we must eat, I return always to that starting-place and we have but one path before us. Hunger

makes the wolf quit the woods ; if you will trust to me, we will look out for an 'affair,' and as soon as it occurs we will put the irons in the fire : what say you, my friends ?"

FRED. "An affair—a robbery !"

HEN. "A robbery !"

SUS. "Why not ?"

FRED. "I am the wood they make flutes of. I bend any way, and may be cooked with any sauce ; but—"

AD. "Do you want courage ?"

FRED. "Do you ask me ?—well, a robbery then !"

AD. "But nothing more ; a theft, and a theft alone, simply to acquire a positive and actual subsistence."

SUS. "That is understood : after that we will be honest again."

FRED. "Shall we ?—who knows ?"

HEN. "Let us first get something to boil in the pot, and then wherewithal to new dress us—not before we want both. When I think that my poor man has only a pair of trowsers to put on, and no shirt, no hat ; and he must ask long enough before he could get another to change . . ."

SUS. "It is not enough to be provided just for the moment, we must have some cash in hand, a hundred sous apiece, to rub against another."

HEN. "Very true ; we must try not to become again as we now are. If we had money we might carry on a little business ; I would make braces, they say they sell well, and turn in a good profit."

AD. "Gently, gently : for the time present let us do all we can, my children. The life of the saints before everything."

ALL. "Yes, the life of the saints and the rest afterwards."

The friends undertook to make a tour ; and three hours had not elapsed after this desperate resolution, before they had taken several impressions ; keys made

and two rooms cleared out ; but this expedition was so little productive, that four days afterwards famine was again in the house. It was necessary to begin again, or to perish. They resolved on a second essay, then a third, twenty were effected in less than two months, and yet the party was nearly as badly off as before. They had flung themselves into the torrent, and the torrent hurried them headlong from crime to crime.

CHAPTER LXII

The morning walk—Ill gotten gains bring nothing but pains—Castle in the air—Gaiety—The storm is preparing—Two keys—The new-laid eggs and the fruit-woman—The unkind landlord—A good deed brings happiness—Precautions.

ONE Sunday morning Adèle had gone out at day-break: Frederic, his wife, and sister, were still asleep, but awoke soon afterwards.

SUS. "It seems that Adèle has taken wing early this morning; I did not hear her go out."

FRED. "Nor I, poor devil! if we do nothing, the fault is not hers."

HEN. "Oh, no, certainly not; she does all the mischief she can."

FRED. "She has all her trouble for nothing, for the gains do not recompense the pains. Have we any bad luck think ye."

SUS. "Faith it's hardly worth while to be thieves."

FRED. "They say that profit acquired by bad means avails nobody; we don't know whether it will be profitable or not, we have never met with a good chance yet."

HEN. "Oh, it will come; we only want the opportunity."

FRED. "And whilst it is coming we are starving."

HEN. "Oh, you have no patience."

FRED. "It is but being gay enough to talk, and do nothing else all day; but that becomes tiresome."

HEN. "Even if your senses were to leave you, we should rub on."

FRED. "Yes, but very poorly."

HEN. "Leave off complaining, and if we once get in the vein——"

SUS. "If ever that happens, I will make up for lost time—I will have such breakfasts!"

HEN. "So will I : I will pay myself for past deprivations by the choicest tit bits in the world !"

FRED. "And I too ! Do you think I will throw my share to the dogs ? I'll pay myself for past losses ! but I don't expect it."

SUS. "He who formerly used to be so merry, and laughed at every thing, is now the first to inspire us with fear and apprehension."

HEN. "He was a careless, reckless fellow ; a *Roger bon temps*, (a lively, merry person) who laughed and jested at every thing : I do not recognise him to be the same man."

FRED. "It is ; you must know that people change : every day we get a day older, and reflect upon it with more seriousness."

HEN. "Reflect ! that does a great deal of good ; here, listen ! somebody comes who does not reflect much. Do you hear her singing on the staircase ?"

SUS. "It is Adèle's voice. What can it be, I wonder, that makes her so merry ?"

FRED. "Most certainly it is not the fine weather ; for the sky is overcast, and there is over Mont Martre a cloud which will descend like a deluge."

HEN. "It looks like heavy rain."

FRED. "It is a bath in preparati u

AD. (*entering quickly, and putting two keys on the chimney place*) "My friends, no more misery ! I have just tried them, they work like angels ; we are masters now and will go to work at once, no later than this very day."

Lifting up her gown behind, she looked at the dilapidation of her shoes and stockings, and sang and danced at the same time :—

Tu ne vois pas, ma chère,
Elle a, elle a
Des trous à ses bas,
Et moi je n'en ai guère ;
Elle a, elle a

Des trous à ses bas,
Et moi je n'en ai pas *.

FRED. "I never saw her in such a mood."

SUS. "Nor I either: she jumps and dances about. Oh! we shall most assuredly have some rain."

FRED. "Well, well, you are as gay as a lark; what's the meaning of all this?"

AD. "Why, the meaning is, that whilst you were sleeping I was at work, quietly but surely. Be easy, my dears, we will have plenty of grist for the mill! There's *swag*, my children! You see these keys, they open a door, and——"

SUS. "But do not keep us on the rack, we are on thorns; you see very plainly that Frederic is dying to know——"

AD. "Yourself you mean, you sly thing; he said nothing."

SUS. "Well, then, say it is myself if you like."

AD. "I will tell you all about it (*feeling in the pocket of her apron*); here are some new-laid eggs: I had eight for our breakfast: I have eaten mine——."

SUS. "That's well; you can speak of that afterwards."

AD. "I got them at the fruit-woman's, in the Rue des Gobelins. You know the little humpbacked woman whom I like to gossip with?"

SUS. "What nonsense she talks about her fruit-woman. What is the fruit-woman to us?"

AD. "What is the fruit-woman to you! Why, if

* Look at her, my dear, and you'll see

That she, that she

Has holes in her stockings; but look at me,
I am as neat as neat can be;

Whilst she, whilst she

Has holes in her stockings; you will not see
A single one if you look at me.

you'll let me tell you, you will find; if you do not wish me to tell you——"

SUS. "Speak, speak; go on your own way, you will be delivered at last."

FRED. "Do not interrupt her."

AD. "In the fruiterer's house lives her landlord, who is as great a miser as ever lived. He is so rich that he cannot count his money: his wife and he have more than a hundred francs a-day to spend, and have only a dog in their service. The fruit-seller told me all this. You must know I have chatted with her to some purpose, and not for useless gossip. I wanted to *draw* her, and have succeeded. Then, whilst talking with her, I kept my eyes open: without appearing to take notice of any thing, I have seen the bags which contained the crowns! With only half, I swear to you, that all our life, as long as we have to live, we should not be in want of any thing, nor be compelled to plunder. How it would turn to profit in our hands! But fortune always attends those who do not know how to make use of her. This miserly old fellow of a landlord, only think, because number eight, one of his lodgers, has not paid his rent on the day fixed, he has made him turn out, goods and all. I saw it: it was a wretched thing to see: a father of a family, six children, and the wife, who was brought to bed the previous evening. They burst into tears, unhappy wretches; they begged, they implored, they supplicated; they might as easily have softened a stone; he thrust them out into the street: the whole neighbourhood were up in arms about it. Well, said I to myself, old rogue, I will not lose sight of you; I will pay you off for this: to those who do ill, ill happens; and if I cannot treat you to a turn of my craft, the fault shall not be mine.

"From that moment I have watched for the opportunity, and to-day it presents itself. I have taken all my measures, and he shall not escape us. He is a skinflint, an usurer: there are enough who have been robbed by him, and when his turn comes——"

SUS. "One thief robbing another is fun for the devil to laugh at."

AD. "Then the devil shall laugh, depend upon it: before night this miserly landlord shall be handled, and without including ourselves, there are others who shall feel the effects of it."

FRED. "I do not clearly understand you; the tenant will have a share."

AD. "A woman just confined! and thrust her out at the door! It is abominable! If it were only ten francs, I would carry her the half of it."

FRED. "Ah! ma'amselle, that would give me great pleasure; you have an excellent heart!"

AD. "I hope so. I should be so happy if I could do all the good I would!"

HEN. "You are right: a good action confers happiness."

AD. "It is not to embarrass one's self—well-regulated charity begins at home; but to solace another, seems to be comforting one's self. I suffer when I see another suffering. Thus we agree: we will send assistance to the family; you all agree to it?"

ALL. "Yes, yes."

SUS. "Let us do to those who deserve it what we would have them do to us."

FRED. "But they must not know who it comes from, that would betray us completely."

AD. "Certainly, they must know nothing about it. Now, my dears, I will explain my plan to you: the usurer goes to Saint Maur with his wife, and they go on foot. They are not to return before to-morrow, so that we have plenty of time before us. However, as in these sorts of matters it is best to be as soon as possible. I shall start at once, you will follow me. Henriette must keep watch in the street; and whilst I draw the fruiteress to the bottom of her shop, Frederic and Susanne must get into the passage. It is the second pair of stairs at the back facing the stair-case as you ascend: there is a wicket at the door, and a stag's

foot at the bell-handle. The small key is to open the safety-latch, and the large one for the lock ; you cannot make a mistake ; you must not forget to take a crow-bar, in case there should be a chest or strong box——”

FRED. “ Susanne can hide it under her petticoats.”

AD. “ And a ring to put into the key hole, for fear of a surprise : do not neglect to take one, we must provide against everything. You know my story with Rigottier.”

FRED. “ That was a lesson.”

AD. “ Yes, and a bitter one!——”

CHAPTER LXIII.

The treasure—Anxious moments—M. and Madame Lombard—The capricious lock—The whale and the elephant—The knitting needle—Thieves—The couple rolled heels over head—The locksmith—The ring taken out—The apron—Send for the Commissary.

BUT a very short time was requisite for the family to dress themselves and make preparations for the expedition. When all was ready, they directed their steps toward the Rue des Gobelins: an half hour afterwards, and Frederic, aided by Susanne, was in a train for working. Never had so much riches appeared before their eyes. There were drawers filled to the top with guineas, ducats, napoleons, and louis of all times and periods, in sacks and parcels whose arrangement betokened their contents; and moreover there was a pocket-book filled with orders for money and bank-notes. How many virtues, how much consideration, how much probity, how much *sterling* honour was here! Susanne and Frederic opened a casket, it was filled with watches, necklaces, bracelets, trinkets, precious stones. They would fain have exhausted Pactolus; with their eyes they overran the treasures of Golconda, but where were they first to begin? Whilst they were hesitating, they heard a noise, and distinguished foot-steps.

"Do not stir," said Frederic, "I think some one is coming up."

They both stood, without daring even to breathe. Some one stopped at the door and tried a key—what an anxious moment!

"We did well to return: you see what a storm was preparing."

"Come make haste, Madame Lombard, you are so very slow."

"Can't you give me time to introduce the key?"

"I think I could have opened it ten times already."

"Oh yes, you are vastly expeditious. I advise you to boast about it, when you are two hours finding the hole, and then if I did not put a hand to it—"

"That you often do. Give it to me, for you make me all in a fidget with your fumbling—"

"Fumbling! I don't fumble; don't you see that I push, but it will not go in."

"Perhaps it has taken a whim."

"A whim!—say rather that the pipe is stopped up. It is your ridiculous custom to have crumbs in your pockets, and some of them have got in, and—"

"You shall see whether that is my fault, in a few minutes. Give it to me, and let me blow in it a little."

"Here, M. Lombard, do what you like with it; (*she gives him the key.*)"

"Ah, that is right. (*He blowed in the pipe, knocked the wards, and alternately knocked and whistled in it.*) It whistles perfectly well, and now ought to enter without any difficulty."

MAD. LOM. (*Trying a second time.*) "Without any difficulty! why it goes worse than ever."

"You don't turn it the right way, perhaps."

"I turn it neither on one side, nor the other, for it does not go in at all."

"Here, take my umbrella, women are so clumsy."

"Well, I give the place up to you, now let's see your cleverness!"

"As clever as you. (*He tries to push it.*) The devil, something prevents it! If I had anything to clean the pipe out: call the fruitwoman."

"Oh you are so much cleverer than I am. (*She called.*) Madame Bouleau!"

FRUITWOMAN. "What do you want, madame?"

MAD. LOM. "Have you anything you can lend us to clean the pipe of our key? Be so kind as to come up stairs."

FR. WOM. "Will this do for you?"

M. LOM. "What is it that you have brought me?
(the wire that you cut your butter with?"

MAD. LOM. "It is too weak, my dear."

FRUITWOMAN. "If Monsieur would put it in
double."

M. LOM. "She is right."

MAD. LOM. "Double and double again, and it will
not do!"

FR. WOM. "I will go and get you a match."

M. LOM. "A match! that will be of less use, for
if it should break in, what should we do then?"

FR. WOM. "Well, will a piece of birch do out of the
broom, will that be better?"

M. LOM. "Bring me a branch of it, the strongest
you can find."

The fruiteress went down and soon returned with a
twig of birch which she gave to M. Lombard.

M. LOM. "It is a faggot stick you have brought
us!"

FR. WOM. "There are none thinner; by forcing it,
you will be able to manage."

M. LOM. "Ah, now you have made me do a nice
job: the branch has broken, and how can I get it out
again?"

FR. WOM. "Do you think that a nail?"

MAD. LOM. "It would be too short."

FR. WOM. "Wait, and I will go and see if I can
find in my drawers some whalebone."

M. LOM. "Whalebone!—why not offer me an ele-
phant's bone?"

FR. WOM. "Why, what the deuce would you
have! the most willing wench can only offer what she
has."

M. LOM. "Have you not got a knitting needle?"

FR. WOM. "A knitting needle! let me see, who
makes stockings that I know? Ah! I remember!
the invalid who is in love with the portress at number
17:—perhaps he will lend me one if I run and ask."

MAD. LOM. "Run quickly—how tiresome!"

M. LOM. "That is, if it be any use to go, and you think he has one."

MAD. LOM. "I hear her galloping along."

M. LOM. "She has not been long; here she comes, and bringing a needle with her—how lucky!"

FR. WOM. "I hope it will be a very strong one."

M. LOM. (*taking the needle.*) "This time we are all right. (*He poked it, blew in it, knocked, knocked again, whistled in it, and knocked it again.*) I really can find nothing in it, it is a very capital needle though."

MAD. LOM. "You ought to know whether or not you have got to the bottom."

M. LOM. "To be sure I do—I touch the iron, it will not go in any further; there is nothing in the pipe, and it should open the door easy enough, or else let us know the reason why. (*He put the key in the hole.*) Well, it is all of no use, this key is enchanted, it will not even enter the lock."

MAD. LOM. "There is perhaps something the matter with the lock, it may be overshot."

M. LOM. "I see what ails it, you have forced it."

MAD. LOM. "I should have been astonished if you had not laid the mischief on my back—always me. More likely a great deal to be some dirty blackguard, who, when passing, has filled the keyhole with gravel. Madame Bouleau does not pay attention to anything; people go up and down, and in and out, they might carry away the house; oh, *mon Dieu!* no attention to any thing."

FR. WOM. "Why, a cat could not pass but I should be at her tail, to see which way she was going."

M. LOM. "If we had a plank, I would make a bridge, and so get in by way of the kitchen window."

FR. WOM. "And so kill yourself!"

MAD. LOM. "Oh, to break your neck is nothing but you will break a square of glass that cost four francs!"

M. LOM. "I did not think of that; four francs

quick, quick, Madame Bouleau, go and call the locksmith; that will be by far the cheaper way."

The fruit-woman went down stairs as speedily as possible, but had scarcely reached the street when the bolt was pulled violently from the staple that confined it.

MAD. LOM. "What ails the lock?"

M. LOM. "Some one is within: we are robbed! thieves, thieves!"

On a sudden the door opened, two persons dashed out; knocked down, driven backwards, upset, Monsieur and Madame Lombard rolled over and over. Were they ghosts? or was it a hurricane, or a thunder-clap? The impetus was so great, the shock so violent, that they could not tell to what they must attribute the brutal impulse they had received. The cause had disappeared, but the effect remained, and the couple, so completely levelled with the ground, deplored the catastrophe most bitterly.

M. LOM. "Ah, ah! I am killed outright; I am murdered, ground to powder; every limb is dislocated; I am massacred, smashed to death! help, help!"

MAD. LOM. "Murder, assassination! Help, help, help! I have got hold of him; help me, M. Lombard, help me."

"M. LOM. "Ah! *mon Dieu!* help! I have broken my loins, they are beaten and mashed to a pulp; the wretches! the glass of my watch is broken too, so are my spectacles, and my limbs."

MAD. LOM. "If you don't come, I must let him go. Guard, guard!"

The fruit-woman returned, accompanied by the locksmith whom she had gone in quest of.

"Ah, what do I see? The citizen on one side, and the lady on the other; what has happened to them? What! is the apartment opened?"

THE LOCKSMITH. "They have been trying to pull the door open, and have tumbled down on all fours."

MAD. LOM. (*rising up.*) "Oh, my legs are broken."

M. LOM. "My back is all a jelly."

MAD. LOM. "If you had not lost your senses we should have caught them; look, I seized the apron of one of them!"

"M. LOM. "There were a dozen at least, and it was done so suddenly and so quickly, that I only saw five."

MAD. LOM. "My dear Madame Bouleau, they trampled all over my body! What an assault! *grand Dieu!* I am wounded all over. Support me, pray; I beseech you!"

M. LOM. (*to the locksmith.*) "My friend, lend me your assistance to crawl to my secretary."

MAD. LOM. (*who had first entered.*) "Ah, the room is in a fine plight! We have been robbed! stripped!"

M. LOM. (*falling into an arm-chair.*) "The wretches! they have left us nothing but our eyes to weep with."

THE LOCKS.—"I could make a very good shift with what they have left behind."

FR. WOM. "And so could I."

MAD. LOM. "We must go and inform the Commissary, and get him to draw up a *procès verbal*—a statement."

M. LOM. "But how could they contrive to get in?"

THE LOCKS. "That's no difficult matter with skeleton keys. There are so many rogues."

He examined the lock, and taking from within it a small ring of iron, which had been put on the stern of the lock, he added,

"I am not astonished that you were unable to open it, they had arranged every thing well; this must be one of the trade who made this ring. Where is the apron that was left in the lady's hands?"

MAD. LOM. "This is it!"

THE LOCKS. (*with much surprise.*) "Can I credit my eyesight? A comrade! I thought him an honest fellow—I would have laid my life upon it. Whom can we trust, if he's a rogue?"

M. LOM. "What do you mean?"

THE LOCKS. "I was speaking to myself. Unfortunate fellow!"

M. LOM. "I am the unfortunate."

THE LOCKS. "There are many, too many, more unfortunate than you (*pointing to the clasp of the apron*). You see this buckle, it is my workmanship. About eleven months since I was at La Courtille, with some friends, one of whom, taking a great liking to it, asked me if I would sell it. I told him that I would not, but that if he was so much in love with it, I would willingly make him a present of it. He accepted it, we drank a bottle or two together, and from that time the clasp has been his, unless it has changed masters."

M. LOM. "And how do you call him? What is his name, eh?"

THE LOCKS. "Frederic; he is a brother workman."

M. LOM. "A very clear account. Madame Bouleau, go instantly to the Commissary; tell him we have nearly been assassinated, myself and wife, and beg him from us to come here immediately, to receive my statement, and the evidence of the locksmith; go, go."

CHAPTER LXIV.

Great joy in the house—A cloud—The work of benevolence—Preparations for a breakfast—The larder replenished—Honest projects—The salt-cellar upset—The Commissary—The search—A visit from a lady—A recognition—Return to St. Lazare—Sentence for life.

IN spite of the most imminent danger, Frederic and Susanne had preserved sufficient presence of mind to carry off the pocket-book of M. Lombard, and put into their pockets two or three bags of gold. On their return to the lodging, they only required a moment to breathe, and divest themselves of the fear they had experienced.

At the sight of the brilliant results of a capture which had nearly entailed on them such a sad termination, all the friends jumped for joy. Frederic then perceived that he had no apron; a cloud of disquietude appeared on his brow, but it soon passed away, and his gaiety returned. They employed themselves in counting the money, which exceeded in amount their utmost wishes or hopes.

FREDERIC. "Well, come, this time we have made a pretty good booty. We shall have no occasion to visit the *fences*."

SUSANNE. "We must steer our boat so as to live comfortably and happily."

ADELE. "And honestly; I must return to that."

HENRIETTA. "That of course is included. Can we be happy unless we are honest?"

AD. "There is nothing in the world like being able to walk along erect, and without owing anything, or having injured any body. Apropos, my dears, you are not ignorant that we have a debt to pay, and a sacred one. The first thing to-morrow morning I will go and discharge it. I will take them an order for a thousand francs."

FRED. "To whom?"

AD. "You do not remember, then, what we have promised?"

HEN. "Do you not remember, Frederic, the woman in the straw?"

FRED. "The father of the family whom our banker has thrust so inhumanly out into the streets:—I do not oppose your intentions. Yes, let us give a thousand francs to these poor people, it is not too much."

The remainder of the day and the following night passed in building castles in the air; they did not close an eye all night. At four in the morning Adèle arose to go and perform the work of benevolence, to which all the party had so freely subscribed. Susanne and Henriette dressed themselves, and went out to market to make purchases for breakfast, which was to be a splendid one. Two hours afterwards they returned with abundant supplies and some domestic utensils, such as plates, fire-irons, several stew-pans, a gridiron, a spit, and a walnut-wood table.

SUS. "Put it down there, my good fellow; here's something for your trouble. Are you satisfied?"

PORTER. "Forty sous! If the rich paid as generously, bread would not be so dear; any other time when you want me——"

HEN. "Stop, and have something to refresh you; they are going to bring up some wine, and I am sure he has deserved to have a drop of something to drink."

PORT. "You are very good, ma'am."

A VINTNER'S MAN. "Here's the twelve bottles of wine you asked for; there is not a drop of water in it: all neat, and good measure, like yourself."

FRED. "Have you got your corkscrew?"

V. MAN. "I never go without it."

FRED. "Draw six corks for us, then, to begin with."

V. MAN. "Will you have any more whilst I am here? It will give me no trouble if you wish me to do it."

FRED. "No, it is enough."

V. MAN. "Since that will do, I take my leave of this amiable society."

HEN. (*pouring out the wine*) "Let those who will drink come here. Porter, here is yours; it is the fullest; you have the first draught; these are new glasses."

FRED. "Who drinks? who drinks?"

PORT. "Since you are so kind as to invite, your health, ladies; yours, my worthy citizen."

He laid his glass down on the table, and went out.

Frederic, then beginning to empty the baskets, said, "Peas, the kettle, French beans, peaches; ah, this fruit is a treat! and we must refuse nothing that is good."

HEN. "He must be poking his nose every where: I tell you that there is nothing more."

FRED. "Ah! what is that?"

SUS. "Whitening to clean the windows."

FRED. "Ah, that is very necessary, the whitening."

HEN. "Did you think we were going to live always in such mess and dirt?"

SUS. "No, sir; here we shall be like living in a little palace."

HEN. "So that one can admire one's self in the squares of glass."

FRED. "Coffee, sugar, brandy! Ah, ah! only see here what a prize!—a leg of mutton! I never was more delighted! I should not be astonished to find a roasting-jack."

HEN. "Yes, my dear, a roasting-jack!—the spit shall turn to-day. Come, quickly, Susanne, and lend me a hand, that we may have all ready before Adèle returns, that we may only have to place ourselves at table."

They had soon made the preparations for this first feast, the produce of an opulence after which they had so long sighed; when the leg of mutton was cooked to a turn, Susanne began to lay the cloth.

HEN. "Well, Frederic, what do you say to it? Have we not done everything in style?"

FRED. "I see that you understand these matters perfectly."

SUS. "Who now would venture to call us any thing but gentlefolks?"

FRED. "Who would venture to do anything of the sort but slanderers?"

SUS. "Does not this look well?"

FRED. "Capital."

SUS. "Ah, now we want some plate; but Paris was not built in a day!"

FRED. "Oh, we can eat our partridges without orange sauce."

HEN. "Never mind, I like to have it though; it does no harm in an establishment; (*she seated herself on Frederic's knee*) we shall have some; sha'nt we? It is so genteel (*embracing him*). Would you like to be dead now?"

FRED. "No, i'faith."

HEN. "How kind was the charcoal not to destroy us!"

SUS. "I should be very sorry not to find myself in this world. It proves that, however wretched or miserable we may be, we ought never to destroy ourselves."

HEN. "But for the masons, but for the plaster and rubbish which fell so opportunely, the worms would have eaten us very soon."

FRED. "Can't we find some other topic of conversation? What is past, let it be past; there is no occasion to think further upon it."

SUS. "Yes, speak of something else: mirth for ever! long live jollity!"

FRED. "I have a devil of an appetite."

HEN. "And so have I: there will be no occasion to press me to eat; I shall play a famous knife and fork."

SUS. "If Adèle were but here, we might begin at once."

HEN. "She cannot be long. Is it she who is making all that noise outside?"

FRED. "I should think not, unless she is bringing the family with her."

SUS. "And she is quite silly enough to do such a thing : Henriette, go and see."

HEN. "How curious you are."

In crossing the room she ran against the table.

SUS. "The giddy girl! she has upset the salt-cellar!"

HEN. "Oh, never mind; I will throw a little over my left shoulder."

She then went to the passage; and returned with looks of fear.

"My friends, we are lost!"

The room was instantly filled by a troop of gendarmes and police officers, headed by a commissary.

"In the name of the law," said the magistrate, "I command you to give me all your keys. Gendarmes, whilst we make the search, do you watch this man and that woman; I shall look for them at your hands."

A BRIGADIER. "Well, they shall not escape."

The COMMISSARY. "It appears that they have a festival here. (*Observing a snuff-box.*) If I am not mistaken, here is one of the objects specified in the declaration. Let us see: a tortoiseshell box with a gold rim; on the lid, the portrait of Madame Lombard, chased on a medallion; on the reverse, the united cyphers of the two, in hair, with the date, and a heart in flames, with a hearts-ease in a knot of love. This answers the description precisely. Gentlemen, Madame Lombard is here; you can judge as well as myself, if you look at this, which perfectly coincides with the description given."

One of the ASSISTANTS. "There can be no doubt of it."

COM. "Then we have detected the thieves. (*To Frederic.*) Do you know one Jacques Richard, of the Rue des Gobelins?"

FRED. "I had a companion named Richard, but he resided in the faubourg Poissonnière."

COM. "The same. Have you never had any thing that was his?"

FRED. (*Aside*) "The apron he sold me.—I see, Monsieur le Commissaire, that all denial will be useless. I committed the robbery."

COM. "We did not require your confession: we had abundance of proof.—(*He produced the apron, which he showed him.*)—Do you recognize this as belonging to you?"

FRED. "I recognize it but too well."

COM. "Are you not a freed convict?"

FRED. "Yes, I was."

COM. "These ladies, too—we have some accounts of them. Gendarmes, confine this youth, and put the handcuffs on the women. Do not spare them."

FRED. "They are not guilty."

COM. "Gendarmes, do your duty."

Whilst they were executing the orders of the Commissary, some one knocked gently at the door. A police officer opened it, and a lady entered whose almost elegant appearance and decent exterior raised a prejudice in her favour.

COM. "What is the lady's pleasure? The lady does not look like a thief; but, under existing circumstances, I cannot do otherwise than inquire what may be her errand here?"

LADY. "What I want here! I came to bring some work."

COM. "You came, you say, to bring some work?"

The LADY. (*Opening her basket.*) "Here, look, there is no occasion for mystery. These are muslin bands which I have brought to be embroidered. There are thirty-four ells: must I unfold it?"

COM. "No, no; that is not necessary: but since you work, of course you are in business?"

LADY. "I keep articles of embroidery, and have an assortment of the newest kind. You are married, sir, I presume: if your lady should wish to make a

few purchases, this is my address.—(*Giving him a printed card.*)—Madame Derval, Boulevard des Invalides, near the Rue de Babylone. She will find at my house all she may require, and on fair terms. I am very accommodating.”

COM. “I see it is truth. This lady’s visit has nothing suspicious about it. The motive is a natural one, and there is no reason why she should be detained. I beg your pardon a thousand times over, madam; but, in our situation, we are sometimes compelled to appear rude.”

At the moment when the lady, just on the point of retiring, replied by a courtesy to the excuses which the commissary made, two other police-agents arrived—Coco Lacour and Fanfan Lagrenouille; who, perceiving her, looked at her with peculiar attention.

C. LAC. “I think I have the honour of knowing madame.”

F. LAG. “And I am sure that I have seen her somewhere.”

LADY. “Possibly; but you have the advantage of me.”

(*This was said with an air of embarrassment.*)

C. LAC. “But surely you know me?”

LADY. “Really, Sir, I do not.”

F. LAG. “The more I examine the lady, the more convinced am I that I am not mistaken. On the word of Lagrenouille, I know you. Come, no *gammon*: you are an old hand. Confess: come.”

LADY. (*Whose agitation became more visible.*) “I really don’t understand you, Sir.”

F. LAG. “Stuff, stuff! You know the *mot* well.—(*To Coco Lacour*)—She’s one that can *patter flash* as well as you or I.”

C. LAC. (*With eagerness.*) “I am *fly*. You are the old lady of Lerouge. Your name is Adèle d’Escars?”

LADY. (*Stammering.*) “I!— I!—. You mistake. That is not my name.”

F. JAG. "You are right, Coco : it is Adèle ! It is she as surely as I shall die in day."

C. LAC. (*putting his hand into the lady's basket and feeling in it*) "I will wager that there is a bit of smuggling here ; it sounds like iron. Let me be sure what it is."

LADY. "I will spare you the trouble." She opened the basket, and took out a bunch of keys with a bundle of receipts, which she threw into the middle of the room.

"Yes, I am Adèle, and what then?"

COM. "She will make the quartette."

BRIGADIER. "The country dance is then complete."

COM. "This young lady must be strictly watched. Keep an eye on her."

Before the tribunal Adèle confessed all her crimes ; but to extenuate her misdeeds she joined to the avowal a recital of her troubles. The jury groaned to hear them ; but the narration did not alter a sentence to perpetual confinement. It was the first time that so terrible a sentence was carried into execution against a female.

When she came to have her head shaved, and to put on the gray frock, Adèle shed a torrent of tears : "After having strived by every means to be honest or to die, to be thrown alive into the tomb ! These gates of Saint Lazare, which I have seen close upon me, will never open again. Never ! never ! for perpetuity ! for perpetuity !" she repeated incessantly, and in the most heart-rending tones, and her words half stifled with sobs. These sorrows have not yet terminated—ADELE suffers yet.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE CHEVALIERS GRIMPANTS.

The *donneurs de bonjours*—The library of a *bonjourier*—The thin shoes—The sins of families—Perpetual laughter—The *goupineur à la desserte*—The mistaken forgers—Advice to the reader.

THE *Chevaliers Grimpants*, called also *voleurs au bonjour*, *donneurs de bonjours*, *bonjouriers*, are those who introduce themselves into a house and carry off in an instant the first movable commodity that falls in their way. The first *bonjouriers* were, I am assured, servants out of place. They were at first few in number, but, soon acquiring pupils, their industry increased so rapidly, that from 1800 to 1812, there was scarcely a day that robberies were not committed in Paris of from a dozen to fifteen baskets of plate. Coco Lacour, from whom I have this fact, has told me that, at the commencement, all the *bonjouriers* made a common purse; but at a later period, when they found amongst them idlers, who, without taking the least trouble, or making the slightest exertion, were desirous of sharing in the common spoil and general produce, this co-fraternal combination ceased to exist, and each began to work solitarily, and on his own account.

The most famous *bonjouriers*, at least those who were pointed out to me on my entrance into office, were *Dalessan, Florent, Salomon, Gorot, Coco Lacour, Francfort, Cheinaux, Hauteville, Mayer, Isaac, Levi, Michel, Tétu*, and some others whose names do not at this moment occur to me.

The *Almanach du commerce*, *l'Almanach royal*, and that with twenty-five thousand addresses in it, are, for a *bonjourier*, the most interesting works that can be published. Every morning, before they go out, they consult them; and when they purpose visiting any

particular house, it is very seldom that they are not acquainted with the names of at least two persons in it; and that they may effect an entrance, they inquire for one when they see the porter, and endeavour to rob the other.

A *bonjourier* has always a gentlemanly appearance, and his shoes always well made and thin. He gives the preference to kid before any other leather, and takes care to bruise and break the sole that it may not creak or make any noise; sometimes the sole is made of felt; at other times, and especially in winter, the kid slipper, or dogskin shoe, is replaced by list shoes, with which they can walk, go up stairs, or descend a staircase, without any noise. The theft *au bonjour*, is effected without violence, without skeleton keys, without burglariously entering. If the thief sees a key in a door of a room, he first knocks very gently, then a little harder, then very loudly; if no person answers, he turns the handle, and thus enters the antechamber. He then advances to the eating-room, penetrates even to the adjoining apartments, to see if there be any person there; returns, and if the key of the sideboard is not to be seen, he looks in all the places in which he knows it is generally deposited, and if he finds it, he instantly uses it to open the drawers, and taking out the plate, he places it generally in his hat, after which, he covers it with a napkin, or fine cambric handkerchief, which, by its texture and whiteness, announces the gentleman. Should the *boujourier*, whilst on his enterprise, hear any person coming, he goes straight towards him, and accosting him, wishes him good morning (*le bonjour*)* with a smiling and almost familiar air, and inquires if it be not Monsieur "such an one," to whom he has the honour of addressing himself. He is directed to the story higher or lower, and, then still smiling, evincing the utmost politeness, and making a thousand excuses and affected bows, he withdraws. It may so happen,

* Whence the name of "*bonjourier*," &c.—TRANSL.

that he has not had time to consummate his larceny, but most frequently the business is perfected, and the discovery of loss only made too late to remedy it.

At the first sight, nothing can be more amiable or more prepossessing than the countenance of a *bonjourier* : he has an incessant smile on his lips, he is affable, respectful, even when he has no object in being so ; but that is all trick and grimace. After a few years exercise, he laughs in spite of himself ; it is a habit, which at length becomes chronic, and he does it habitually, and without consciousness. We do not meet *bonjouriers* every day, but we continually find ourselves face to face with young abbés, or old unfrocked priests ; and a visage modelled at the Seminary never loses the form which has been systematically imprinted on it. If a devotee's mien may be retained for ever, we may easily credit the same perpetuity for a smiling, simpering countenance. If you doubt what I say, go to the petite Rue Sainte-Ann, and ask to see M. Coco.

Sometimes, despite his elegant and insinuating way, it happens that the *bonjourier* pitches on persons who are acquainted with his character and penetrate his intentions, and not only suspect, but search him. In this case, if he has the property found upon him, he falls at the knees of the persons who are storming at him, and to appease them and induce them to take pity on his situation, he tells them, with tears in his eyes, a doleful tale of his wants, his woes, his tribulations ; a tale already got by heart for the occasion, before he started on his perilous vocation. He belongs to honest parents : the dire passion of gambling has tempted, urged, impelled him into crime : it is his first attempt ; if he be handed over to justice and the severity of the laws, his father, mother, family, will expire of shame and grief. If his ready tears produce the anticipated and successful effect, and he be told to go hang himself some where else, his repentance lasts until he attains the threshold : if they be inflexible, he is in despair

until the police arrive, but when that has occurred, he resumes his pristine serenity, and the muscles, pregnant of a smile, return to their accustomed laxity.

The majority of the thieves in this particular line commence their incursions with morning, at the hour when the housekeepers go out for their cream, or have a gossip whilst their masters and mistresses are in bed. Other *bonjouriers* do not open the campaign until near dinner time; they pitch upon the moment when the plate is laid upon the table. They enter, and in the twinkling of an eye, they cause spoons, forks, ladles, &c. to vanish. This is technically termed *goupiner à la desserte*, (clearing the cloth).

One day one of these *goupineurs à la desserte* was on the look out in a dining room, when a servant entered carrying two silver dishes, between which were some fish. Without being at all disconcerted, he went up to her, and said,—“ Well, go and bring up the soup, the gentlemen are in a hurry.”

“ Yes, sir,” said the maid, taking him for one of the guests, “ it is quite ready, and if you please you can announce the dinner.”

At the same time she ran to the kitchen, and the *goupineur*, after having hastily emptied the dishes, thrust them between his waistcoat and shirt. The girl returned with the broth, the pretended guest had retired, and there was not a single piece of silver left on the table. They denounced this theft to me, and from the statement given, as well as the description of the person committing the robbery, I thought I had recognised my man: He was called *Cheinaux*, alias *Bayer*, and was discovered and apprehended in Saint Catherine’s market. His shirt was marked with the circumference of the dishes, in consequence of the remains of the sauce left in them.

Another body of *bonjouriers* more particularly direct their talents to furnished houses.

The individuals forming this class are on foot from the dawn of day. Their talent is evinced by the adroit

môde in which they baffle the vigilance of the porters. They go up the staircase, sometimes on one pretext, and sometimes on another, look round them, and if they find any keys in the doors, which is common enough, they turn them with the least possible noise. Once in the room, if the occupant be asleep, farewell to his purse, his watch, his jewels, and all that he has that it is valuable. If he awakes, the visiter has a thousand excuses ready.

“A thousand pardons, sir, I thought this was No. 13;” or, “Was it you, sir, who sent for a bootmaker, tailor, hairdresser,” &c. &c.

Jews and some females, not all Israelites, are the principal persons who carry on the war in this department. More than one traveller, stripped by them whilst sleeping, has been left with only the shirt on his back.

Reader, if you would not have any apprehensions from the *Chevaliers grimpants*, never leave the key in your door: never hide that of your sideboard, for they will certainly find it; but conceal it in your pocket. Let your porter have a bell or a whistle, to indicate the arrival of a stranger, and the story he is going to; don't let him be bootmaker, tailor, nor shoemaker; let him have no trade but that of a porter. Do not allow him to sweep in the morning, without keeping his door shut, or else leaving on the look out his daughter or some other person. Do not forget, as I believe I have told you before, that thieves are in the practice of searching under the mattresses, the carpets, in the vases, the sideboards, behind pictures, in the corners of the fire-places, in the curtains, &c. Desire your servants never to allow any person to remain alone, in any room belonging to your apartments. If any one in your absence asks permission to leave a line for you, let your servant mind how he goes to fetch the paper; rather desire him to send for it, or else desire the visiter to leave it at the lodge, where they will give him what he asks for.

Distrust all hawkers of glass, sellers of wooden spoons, menders of crockery, savoyards, and that roving army of men and women who carry about muslins, linen, calico, &c. &c. Follow the milliners who go up stairs with their cards and boxes, sellers of decorations for toilettes, and others who come to offer you goods: all these trotters and trampers are thieves, or in alliance with thieves, to whom they give all requisite information. Always be on your guard when there are, or after there have been, workmen in the house you inhabit. Most frequently one or more robberies are committed after the departure of masons, tilers, whitewashers, bricklayers, &c. Never deal with *old clothes' men, old lace buyers, but in the street*. If you can do otherwise, never lodge in the same house with a washerwoman, a medical man, a midwife, a commissary of charity, a pawnbroker, a justice of the peace, or commissary of police, a lawyer, or a constable. Avoid houses where there is much bustle, and perpetual ingress and egress of people.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE BONCARDIERS,

The *boncardier* on the look-out—Keep a good dog—Advantages of disorder—Children's playthings and crockery—The extended cord—Detonating peas—Regular passports.

THE BONCARDIERS are thieves who rob shops during the night. *Boncardiers* never plunder from a shopkeeper without having first reconnoitred the obstacles that may be in the way of their enterprise. When they have projected an entrance into any particular shop, morning and evening, for several successive days, they lurk about in the neighbourhood, to assist at the opening or shutting up of the place. They then remark how the fastenings are made, and if they are difficult or not to draw back: they endeavour to ascertain whether or not there be a dog on the premises, or if any person sleeps there. Frequently, to be more assured and to obtain all the information they require from the fountain head, they go to the shopkeeper under a pretence of purchasing; sometimes they do actually buy, but always mere trifles, which they are as long in deciding upon as possible. No one is so indecisive as a *boncardier* on the look out: he comes, he goes, comes again, goes again, returns—and when the price is agreed upon he still wavers as to his choice.

The shopkeeper who happens to perceive the same individual espying the approach to his establishment, or has a visit from one of those purchasers who bate him down, "*chisel*" him down, penny after penny, will do well to be on his guard. Let him procure a good dog: the largest are the best for defence; but for watching, I decidedly give the preference to a small one, that breed which has the finest ear and sleeps the lightest. The custom of having some person to sleep

in the shop is one that cannot be too strongly insisted on or commended.

The *boncardiers* are generally well known thieves, already marked by the police, and, therefore, but seldom go out by day, for fear of meeting the police-agents.

Most generally a shopkeeper, before he retires to rest, desires his clerk or shop girls to put every thing in its place: chairs, stools, ladders, and all the moveable furniture. He would act more wisely were he to desire them to do precisely the contrary, for the greater the confusion the more thieves are perplexed and embarrassed. He would do much better were he to leave his shop in disorder, a chair upset, a stool well placed for any one to tumble over; the least noise, and consequently the slightest fall, leads to inevitable detection. *Boncardiers* seldom visit crockery sellers, or dealers in children's playthings and toys: at the shops of the former breakage is to be feared; at the latter, the incumbrances are dangerous. What perils to encounter in traversing in darkness amongst legions of animals! a hand touches them, a foot is awkwardly placed on one, snap they go: a shepherd is knocked in two, or a lamb bleats. Flight is inevitable—the alarm is given.

The country *boncardiers* are for the most part ostensibly tradespeople who travel. They never arrive but at night at the place where they intend to levy contributions. A few moments afterwards they commence their operations, and the goods, as fast as they are stolen, are deposited in their travelling cart. The job finished, they proceed to another place, where they sell piecemeal what they stole wholesale. If they have appropriated to themselves articles of gold or silver easily recognized, they convert them into ingots.

One of the first cares of the *boncardiers* is to alter the appearance of the booty they have acquired. If they be silks, or woollens, or cambrics, &c., they take off the end of each piece, and cut out, or in some way de-

stroy, the mark or number that can indicate that they procured them not in the regular way of trade, although they sometimes visit the manufacturers themselves. The fall of a few light planks placed on a very slight cord extended across the shop about four or five feet from the ground, is the best trap that can be laid for the detection of the *boncardiers*, particularly when they have commenced their expedition without a dark lantern. When they walk groping along, their hands are thrust forwards, and it may happen that they touch the cord; but then the thieves gain nothing, for the slightest motion communicated to the string will cause the planks to fall, and considerable noise is produced; the thieves fear that some persons will come, and as they have no inclination to be caught in the very act, *flagrante delicto*, however bold or determined they may be, they make off as fast as possible. Detonating peas thrown on the floor may also cause a timely explosion and alarm.

There are not means wanting whereby to protect persons and their property from the attempts of the *boncardiers*; but these methods are only efficacious whilst kept secret, and it would not be prudent to divulge them here. A German proverb says that "*a good lock makes a skilful thief*:" that is, because a good lock is not a mystery, but I fear to explain myself fully.

I think these thieves might be reduced to complete inaction if honest folks would be advised to reflect on the circumstances which have thwarted the best possible devised plans for effecting a robbery. During some years, working locksmiths have imagined a multitude of secrets, traps, and surprises; but all these inventions, so very expensive, are not within the reach of the community at large. Let those persons who wish to be in security at a small expense, and protect themselves and property, come and consult me, and I will, with pleasure, initiate them into plans of but trifling cost. Robbery is like swindling, we can annihilate it when we will; but it is only confi-

dentially that I can reveal to the parties interested the system which must infallibly lead to this result without the vigilance of the police, which is so frequently eluded.

Whilst mentioning the country *boncardiers*, I have forgotten to remark, that, as well as the *escarpes*, or assassins by profession, they are always furnished with regular passports, very correctly examined by the authorities of the districts through which they chance to pass. It must be remarked, that it is in France only, that honest persons incur any risk in travelling without papers: rogues, on the contrary, take care how they bring themselves under the law and ordinances, by virtue of which a *brevet de circulation* is required for the least change of place. If I were a gendarme, the person bearing a passport that had undergone the *visa* should always be suspected by me. Dangerous vagabonds and rambles have great care how they have it noticed, and set down, as it were, at every step, that they are not in a state of vagabondism, or wandering about without end, purpose, or business. The man of irreproachable character gives himself but little uneasiness respecting these formalities; he passes them by, either because he is negligent, or because he has an objection to placing himself in contact with anything that bears the name of police. As he has a consciousness of his own innocence, both as respects his motions, his intents, and his actions, he does not think that every body in the world should have a right to say to him, "*Where are you going to? Where do you come from?*" If he loves his dignity, his liberty, his independence, a passport is to him a real humiliation, because the necessity of pulling it out whenever and wherever it is asked for, exposes him to the inquiries, and to the impertinent observations of a gendarme, who can scarcely read, or of a patrol who is no better informed. The gendarmes themselves are so well persuaded that to ask any person for his passport is to affront him, that they very seldom inquire of well-dressed persons: they generally content

themselves with looking at them, and saluting them as they pass.

A well-dressed man is perhaps a friend of the attorney-general, the *sous préfet*, or the mayor; a well-dressed man is perhaps a man in office, whom it is best not to disturb. The injunction to show a passport is always more or less offensive; it is an order which offends self-love, because it comes from so low a source, and there is no citizen who does not esteem himself, and think himself, higher in rank and consideration than a gendarme. I say that this injunction is an order. I add that it is a most imperative order, because it is impossible not to obey it: and then, by a very natural susceptibility, the feelings revolt at the thoughts of a motiveless suspicion. The law prescribes, that the gendarme should consider as suspected every individual whose countenance is not familiar to him. Thus, I am suspected, not because my conduct has legalized this species of precaution, but from the sole fact of my existence; the law insults me.

This is not all; according to political circumstances, or the caprices of local authorities, a passport applied for has more than once been refused. A passport, then, is a permission, it is moreover a tax. Let us hope that, in future, all the inconveniences that I have described will disappear. I do not presume that they will entirely do away with passports, but that they will suppress the abuses and vexations to which they give birth, and that they will impose on us no longer those superfluous posting-bills, in which the vagueness of a description that suits every person, exposes us to perpetual suspicion and impertinence. Remember the unfortunate Chauvet, the victim of a mistake of M. the king's attorney-general of Saint Quentin.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE DETOURNEURS AND DETOURNEUSES.

The good hiding-place—The customer in a hurry—Magic words—The *preparateurs*—Boxes with double bottoms—Secret pockets—The child on the counter—A woman who knew how to handle her feet—Advice to jewellers—The mendicant—The *chipeurs* of distinction.

THE robbery *à la detourne* is that which is effected whilst making purchases at a shop. This species of plunder is practised by individuals of both sexes; but the *détourneuses*, or *lady prigs*, are generally esteemed more expert than the *détourneurs*, or *gentlemen prigs*. The reason of this superiority consists entirely in the difference of dress; women can easily conceal a very large parcel. I have followed *détourneuses* who, having between their thighs a piece of stuff twenty-five or thirty ells in length, walked without letting it fall, and went in this way for a considerable distance without appearing the least encumbered.

This is the mode adopted by the thieves, male and female, *à la detourne*. One of the gang goes to a shop and asks for several descriptions of goods, which he has opened, and whilst he appears occupied with choosing, one or two accomplices come in to purchase other goods. They always ask for the articles which are kept in the upper shelves, and behind the shopkeeper; and whilst he is turning his back to seek for the goods asked for, one of the thieves takes up what is most convenient and nearest, and immediately makes off.

Robberies *à la detourne* are very frequent both in Paris and in the country; they are committed in great numbers at the fairs of St. Denis, Beaucaire, Guibray, Rheims, Metz, and Montmerle, near Lyons.

The *détourneuses* are always elegantly attired, unless they are dressed like countrywomen, and then their

garb is rich. they have what they call good and handsome, and for the most part represent themselves to be shopkeepers.

The best way to escape their clutches is not to show them any new articles until you have put away that first produced. Thus it is easy to count what is put on the counter. In retail shops it would be an advisable plan, when there are many customers to serve, that from time to time the shopmen should say to each other, *deux sur dix* (two on ten), or else, *allumez les gonzesses* (twig the prigs). I will bet a thousand to one that, on hearing these words, the thieves, who have very fine ears, will make haste to take themselves away.

Detourneurs and *detourneuses* employ all sorts of expedients to attain their object, and rob the shopkeeper. Those who usually fill the character of *preparateurs* select before hand and lay aside on the counter the articles they wish to appropriate to themselves; as soon as all is ready, and the moment is opportune, they make a signal to their accomplices who are outside. They enter, wish to be served, and are in a great apparent hurry; the shopkeeper, not to lose a customer, divides his attention, and whilst he is puzzled what and who to answer, the goods disappear. Thieves who prig clear muslin lace, napkins, or other light and small articles, have with them boxes made of pasteboard, and apparently carefully tied up, but which have a false bottom that is moveable, and gives a facility of introducing underneath those articles on which they lay them down.

The *detourneuses* have pelisses or mantles, the lining of which form a pocket large enough to contain many articles; when they have not cloaks they have shawls, of a size to favour their projects; the petticoats of those who are dressed like peasants are, in fact, game bags, with secret pockets and divisions.

Some *detourneuses* are attended by a nurse, who carries a child, dressed in a very long frock. The nurse places the child on the counter, and, on lifting it up,

secreted also those articles which her mistress has placed conveniently in the way. *Detourneuses* of an inferior grade have baskets with a double bottom. I knew a celebrated plunderer of lace, named Dumaz, who to attain her ends acquired a singular knack. They showed her Mechlin or English point lace, and, on examining it, she endeavoured to drop a piece, and, if it were not perceived, with her right foot, the toes of which were at liberty, she placed the lace cleverly in her shoe, which was made large enough to receive it. Sometimes, before Madame Dumaz left the shop, the shopkeeper missed the lace ; she insisted on being searched, no one would ever think of a receiving shoe, and as they found nothing, they were compelled to apologise to her, and to think that the piece of lace had disappeared before she came in. Who the deuce would have imagined that it was requisite to examine her feet as well as hands ? The catechism only alludes to the picking and stealing of the hands.

Jewellers are very subject to visits from *detourneurs*. One named *Velu*, alias *Henri*, an officer of the free company of Simeon, passed his time in considering the jewels and watches exposed to view, and whenever he discovered a mass of rings, or other valuable ornaments, which, according to custom, are laid out in cases placed in the exterior window, he observed them with attention, and the next day went to the identical shop to purchase a ring. According to their usual practice they presented to him several to choose from, and whilst appearing to try one on, he abstracted some articles from the group of gold ornaments, and substituted one similar in appearance, but unfortunately only of brass. If the rogue had not purchased, they might have suspected the fraud, but he did not try to bate them down, and paying the price demanded, the brass was placed in the shop front to await the coming of another customer.

One *Florentin* was one day at a jewellers, purchasing brilliants, unset ; a man came to the door asking for

charity. Florentin took a piece of money from his purse and gave it to him; the piece of money slipped from his fingers, the beggar stooping down, picked it up and went away.

This circumstance was scarcely remarked. The purchase concluded, Florentin laid down four hundred francs, and had a bill of parcels given to him. All was settled, when at the moment he had closed the parcels, the jeweller perceived that he missed a gem valued at from five to six thousand francs; they looked everywhere for it; the paper containing it could not be found. Florentin said that he would not go out until they had searched him. That they might not disoblige him, they did search, but nothing was found on him but the purchase he had just completed; he had excellent papers and testimonials with him, and everything tended to prove that he was a man of integrity and good conduct. They let him go, and whither did he bend his steps? to rejoin the mendicant called *Tormel*, alias *Franz*, his accomplice, who, with the piece of money, had also picked up the parcel of diamonds which Florentin had expertly let fall.

Shopkeepers of what class soever, particularly retailers, cannot be too much on their guard: they should never forget that in Paris there are thousands of male and female thieves *à la detourne*. I here only speak of robbers by profession; but there are also *amateurs*, who, beneath the cover of a well-established reputation, make small acquisitions slyly and unsuspectedly. They are very honest people they say, who with little scruple indulge their propensity for a rare book, a miniature, a cameo, a mosaic, a manuscript, a print, a medal, or a jewel that pleases them; they are called *Chipeurs*. If the *Chipeur* be rich, no heed is paid to him, he is too much above such a larceny to impute it to him as a crime; if he be poor, he is denounced to the attorney-general, and sent to the galleys, because he robbed from necessity. It must be owned that we have strange ideas as to honesty and dishonesty.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

VOLEURS ET VOLEUSES SOUS COMPTOIR.

Both sides of the way—The watchmaker and the hatter—Dupes and accomplices—*La Connarde*—The dispute.

THE theft *sous comptoir* is of modern invention, and it is necessary for the interest of trade to describe how it is effected. Individuals, for the most part females dressed like servants, look out in a large street for two shops situated nearly opposite to each other. Suppose them to be respectively the one a watchmaker's, the other a hatter's; the thief enters the hatters, and asks for a hat, taking care that what she wants is not ready; it requires trimming, which will take an hour; in the mean time she goes and returns, re-enters the shop of the hatter, stands at the door, and when she is sure that the watchmaker has seen her, she crosses quickly over the street, and going to the shop, says,—

“ Mr. So and so—(giving the hatter's name) begs you will let me have two gold watches, from about a hundred-and-twenty to a hundred-and-thirty francs value; it is for a present I desire to make to my brother, but master wishes to choose.”

The watchmaker recognizes the servant, and feeling quite safe, gives her the watches, which she takes away with her. The watchmaker from his counter can see her return to the hatters; he almost assists at the examination of the articles, sees them pass from the hand of the hatter to those of his men, and cannot have but a single doubt,—that they do not please. A moment afterwards the trimming of the hat is terminated, the servant takes it, and going over to the watchmaker, says to him—

“ Sir, my master has chosen that of a hundred-and-

thirty francs; I am going a little way to carry a bonnet home, and when I return I will come and settle with you, but you must take off something."

"Well, well, we shall see," says the watchmaker.

One hour, two,—three pass away, no one returns; he then determines on going over to the hatters, when the whole affair is explained.

It frequently occurs that two shopkeepers are robbed by the same person. One of the female practitioners in this line, named *Connarde*, went to a linendraper, and asked for some cards of lace for the wife of the goldsmith opposite: the draper did not hesitate to give them; *la Connarde* with a bandbox in her hand went to the goldsmith, and asked for two gold chains for her mistress who was opposite; then going out immediately, without leaving the bandbox, she returned to the linendraper.

"Madame," she said to her, "my mistress wishes to show the lace to one of her friends."

"As she pleases, we are in no hurry about it."

She then returned to the goldsmith: "Madame," she said, "will examine the chains, and when I have returned from my errand, I will try and agree with you for a small one for myself."

The servant disappeared; on both sides of the way it was thought that all was right; at last the linendraper was the first who became impatient, and she went over to see her neighbour.

"Well, what do you think of the lace? You can't do better than keep them all."

"Do you think I would take lace for my chains?"

"Did I not send you a bandbox full this morning by your servant?"

"You mean to say that your nurse came to ask for two fashionable chains for you."

"Neighbour, you are dreaming most certainly."

"I think you are."

"Nonsense, I did not come to joke, but inquire about the lace."

“ I do not joke any more than you do, we are talking about gold chains, and you have two of mine.”

On both sides they began to use high words, and the dispute became exceedingly warm, when the goldsmith himself arrived very *à propos* to explain to the ladies that they had been robbed.

CHAPTER LXIX.

LES CAREURS.

Take care of your money—The woman Caron again—The liquor-merchant robbed—The baker of the Rue Martinville—The pretended widows—The priests of Saint Gervais and Saint Medard—The height of wickedness—The gypsies.

INDIVIDUALS, men or women, present themselves in a retail shop of great business: after having purchased several articles, they give in payment a twenty-franc piece, or else another coin whose value considerably exceeds the amount of their purchase. The shopkeeper gives them the change; they remark, whilst examining the money they have received, one or two pieces which are different from the others; and if the opportunity of making such a remark does not occur, they contrive the means of making it by the introduction of a piece of different stamp. Be this as it may, when shewing to the shopkeeper the coin he has given or thinks he has given, they say,—

“Have you any more such pieces as this? if you have, and will agree to my proposal, I will give you a per centage on every one you have, never mind how many.”

The old pieces of twenty-four sous, those of twelve, the small crown pieces, the crowns of six livres, either *à la vache* or with the W, are the kind to enable them to make a proposition of this nature: but woe to that shopkeeper who allows himself to be seduced by such a proposition, if, on proceeding to the search for the coveted coin, he allows access to his till to the persons who offer him the profit: he may be assured that they will subtract the cash with so much legerdemain, that he will not be able to detect them. This is what they term *prigging à la care*; and the thieves who prac-

tise this species of robbery have taken the name of *Careurs*.

There are no expedients to which these rogues do not have recourse to dupe the tradesmen : to-day they employ one stratagem, to-morrow they have another ; but there is always some exchange in the affair ; and thus, whatever be the pretext under which a stranger, man, woman, or child, present themselves with and offer to exchange money, it is prudent to turn a deaf ear, and dangerous to yield to the temptation. How many money-changers, lottery-office keepers, tobacco-dealers, bakers, vintners, grocers, butchers, &c. have been duped by these adroit cheats, who most particularly address themselves to extensive retail dealers !

The *Careurs* are easily known, for as soon as the till is opened to select the money that they pretend to want, they infallibly plunge their hands into the drawer as if to help in the selection, or point out the particular pieces they require. If, by chance, the shopkeeper has occasion to go into his back shop to get the change for the piece of gold tendered in payment, they follow him, and arrange so well, that they contrive to get their fingers into the bag.

Nearly all the *Careurs* are gypsies, Italians, or Jews. The woman Caron, of whom we have heard in the preceding volumes, was a most expert *Careuse*. One day she entered a liquor-shop, kept by the Sieur Carlier, in the market Saint Jacques. Madame Carlier was alone. The woman Caron called for a glass of aniseed, paid with gold, and made her *plant* so well, that, after ten minutes conversation, the mistress went into the room to get a bag containing seven hundred and fifty francs. At the end of a quarter of an hour Caron went away, but scarcely had she departed when Madame Carlier, who can attest the fact, as she is still living, counted her money, which she found reduced to half its original amount. The *Careuse* had so completely wheedled her, that in her presence she really saw double. This robbery having been denounced to me

by the skill displayed I felt convinced I knew the authoress of it, who was apprehended, convicted, and sentenced.

There is not, I believe, any presti-digitator (slight-of-hand-man) in the world who can compete with the famous *Duchess* mentioned in these Memoirs*. One day, whilst a baker's wife, in the Rue Martinville, at Rouen, was examining a sum of two thousand francs which she was carrying in her apron, she took from her nearly half. The baker's wife, feeling that her load was so much lighter, found that she was robbed, and was going to have the *Duchess* apprehended; but she would not give her the chance of doing so, saying to her:—

“Look, ma'am; count your money.”

The baker's rib counted, and found it right to a penny.

The male and female purloiners *à la care* are also very expert in effecting a substitution of one article for another. A jeweller shows a gold ornament or precious stone; they purchase a trifle, and leave crystal or paste in lieu of some valuable trinket or gem.

The woman Caron, the Duchess, and another gypsy called *la Gaspard*, had devised a singular means of robbing priests. Clothed in mourning, (to imitate, as much as possible, the widows of rich farmers,) they went to church, and endeavoured to draw into conversation the letter-out of chairs or the candle-lighter. They know that these inferior persons like to gossip. The pretended widows questioned them on the subject of the pecuniary situation of each of the ecclesiastics of the parish, and as soon as one of them seemed worth “powder and shot” (*valoir le coup de fusil*, that was their expression,) to obtain access to them, they desired them to say masses, or else, poor frightened souls, they submitted to them some case of conscience, and testified a desire to accomplish good works. It was their intention to give alms, and they besought the priest to point out to them the unhappy and indigent whom they

* Vol. i. p. 59 &c. and vol. iii. p. 184.

could solace in their misery. The priest did not fail to tell them of several poor wretches who were in deep distress, and fitting objects of their bounty; and they instantly hastened to visit the necessitous paupers mentioned to them, either giving them money or clothing.

"It is to the recommendation of M. Such-an-one," they told them, "that you are indebted for the interest we take in your unfortunate situation."

These indigent parishioners ran to thank M. Such-an-one, who was enchanted at his penitents. He was their ghostly adviser and spiritual director; he knew their inmost hearts, they were all virtue; he would have administered the sacrament to them without confession. But once thus established, this confidence which he had in the pious relicts costs him dear. One morning, or one evening, the time of day is not of much moment, the ecclesiastic was completely plundered, and the pious women disappeared, and were seen no more.

They robbed in this way a priest of St. Gervais, whose watch, purse of gold, and other valuables they took; and a priest of St. Medard was in a similar manner laid under contributions by these gypsies. When they had thus reduced the servant of God to a nakedness perfectly apostolic, they put the copestone on their wickedness, by robbing the unfortunate creatures whom they had assisted. They went to their house, inquired into their wants, made them open the cupboards, drawers, examined every article in their wardrobe, under pretence of seeing what they most needed, and if, during the operation, they saw a watch, buckles, chain, or anything of value, they secreted it, and then manifesting a desire to go away, "It is well, my children," said mother Caron; "I know what you want better than yourselves;" and at the same moment she went out, taking care, to prevent an immediate discovery, to make them accompany her to the bottom of the staircase. The people whom these wretches plundered with such atrocity were usually poor creatures, who, even in the depths of the greatest distress, have

preserved still some relics of former days and original ease.

Whilst I was in the police, more than sixty complaints, in which were described such acts, were denounced against the woman Caron or her daughter. At length I contrived to arrest these abominable creatures, who are still in prison. The gypsies do not confine themselves to these means of appropriating to themselves the property of another: they frequently commit murder, and they have the less objection to commit a murder, because they have no feeling of any kind of remorse; and they have a peculiar kind of expiation whereby they purify themselves. For a year they wear a coarse woollen shirt, and abstain from *work* (robbing). This period elapsed, they believe themselves as white as snow. In France, the majority of the persons of this caste call themselves Catholics, and have every external show of great devotion. They always carry about them rosaries and a crucifix; they say their prayers night and morning, and follow the service with much attention and precision. In Germany, they seldom exercise any other calling than that of horse doctor, or herbalist: some addict themselves to medicine, that is to say, profess to be in possession of secret means of effecting cures. A vast number of them travel in bodies, some tell fortunes, others mend glass, china, pots, and pans; woe to the inhabitants of the country overrun by these vagabonds! There will infallibly be a mortality amongst the cattle, for the gypsies are very clever in killing them, without leaving any traces which can be converted into a charge of malevolence against them. They kill the cows by piercing them to the heart with a long and very fine needle, so that the blood flowing inwardly, it may be supposed that the animal died of disease. They stifle poultry with brimstone; they know that then they will give them the dead birds; and whilst they imagine that they have a taste for carrion, they make good cheer, and eat delicious meat. Sometimes they want hams, and then

they take a red herring and hold it under the nose of a pig, which, allured by the smell, would follow them to the world's end.

I shall not expatiate more fully on the manners of the gypsies, confining myself to referring the curious reader to the interesting history published in Germany by the learned Grellmann,* in which he will find an exact account of this people, the individuals of whose species have been introduced with so little truth by the first romance writer of our time.

* *Histoire des Bohémiens*; or, Picture of the Manners, Usages, and Customs, of this wandering Tribe, with historical researches on their Origin, Language, and first appearance in Europe. By H. M. G. Grellmann. Translated from the German. Second Edition in 8vo. Paris: Chaumont, Bookseller Palais Royal.

CHAPTER LXX.

LES ROULETIERS.

The obedient driver—The bold robber—The diadem of the Queen of Naples—The diamonds and the ball in the Rue Frépillon—The preservatives.

THE *Rouletiers* are those who plunder portmanteaus, imperials, and other property, from carriages, on which they are placed. The majority of rouletiers are of the working class, and usually dressed as porters, messengers, or waggoners. At one time they existed in considerable numbers, and had their stations in various parts of the city, where the arrival of coaches, carriages, &c. were most frequent, and afforded the best facility for the prosecution of their designs. The Rue d'Enfer, the Fauxbourgs Saint-Honoré, Saint-Martin, Saint-Denis, the Boulevards, the Place Louis XV., the Rues des Bourdonnais, des Lavandières, Tire-Chappe, and Montorgueil, were incessantly infested by rouletiers.

When robbers of this class had cast their eyes on an errand cart or other vehicle containing luggage, they followed them, and at the first halt accomplished their design, and but few carriages are used which have not paid something like a contribution to them. The first who excelled in this department, were *Fanfan Maison*, the brothers *Servier*, *Jean Goupi*, *Herriez*, *Cadet*, *Nissel*, *Dubois l'Insolent*, *Roblot*, *Lafrance*, *Ligny*, *Doré*, &c. all men as daring as expert. Post-chaises, berlins, taxed carts, diligences, no sort of vehicle came amiss to them, and they plundered with incredible audacity. One of the gang accosted the waggoner, and detained him at the head of his horses, whilst the others opened the waggon and took out the bales, boxes, &c.

I have been told, that the brothers *Servier*, and two

other rouletiers, being at nightfall on the Champs Elysées, the elder, having entered into conversation with a coachman, endeavoured to distract his attention whilst his comrades were at work. Suddenly the driver, perceiving by a motion at the back part of the coach that his vehicle was weighed down by some persons behind, wanted to see what occasioned this movement; "I command you not to look back," said Servier to him, and the charioteer obeyed.

I have been assured, that very frequently it has occurred that Goupi has got on a coach in the market-place, and taken down trunks as if belonging to himself.

One day I followed a famous *rouletier* named *Gosnet*. On reaching the Rue Saint Denis, he jumped up on a coach, put on a cloak and cotton cap which he found lying close to his hand, and in this dress got down again with a portmanteau under his arm. It was not later than two o'clock in the afternoon; but to elude all suspicion, Gosnet, on alighting, went straight to the *conducteur* (guard), and after having spoken to him, turned down a street close at hand. I was in waiting for him, he was apprehended and sentenced.

The *rouletiers* are not the best informed people in the world, and thus sometimes in their expeditions they carry off booty of considerable value, but the worth of which they are completely ignorant of. One of them, whom the robbery of a trunk belonging to the Queen of Naples had made possessor of a diadem, made a present of it to a common girl with whom he lived, wishing to spare himself the expense of an ornamental comb which he had long promised her. For want of a better, she condescended to wear the royal ornament, and appeared decked with it at a ball in the Rue Frépillon, in the Cour St. Martin. It was no doubt the first time that diamonds had ever been seen there.

Would you set all the rouletiers at defiance? Do not fasten on your travelling trunks, nor your imperials,

either with leather straps or cords, but with iron chains which cannot be forced without communicating with a bell concealed in a secret place which will give the alarm. This piece of advice is for travellers, and not for waggoners. They must have good dogs, the fiercer the better; and these guardians should be kept within the conveyance, and not underneath it. Let carters never go alone when they can do otherwise; let them abstain from the bad habit of going into all the alehouses on the road. The offer of a glass of beer, wine, or spirits by a stranger is frequently only a trap to catch flats. They are thieves who regale the unsuspecting carter.

Washerwomen will do well to have their carts watched by a grown up person, and not by children who fall asleep, or whose attention is very easily distracted from their charge. They show them a cockchafer, and the cockchafer and the thief fly* away at the same time.

Messengers who are returning, should never put their money in bags placed one on the other, as is the usual custom; on the contrary, it is necessary that they should have it constantly in view; if not, whilst they are walking on foot, they may search, find, and make off with the cash. Thieves have had the perseverance to go many leagues in a light cart, following some object, and awaiting a propitious moment to effect their purpose and decamp.

* *Voler* is to "rob" and "fly away" also.—The pun is lost in the translation.—Tr.

CHAPTER LXXI.

LES TIREURS.

The owner of the learned ass—The Englishman at the parade—The *Nonnes*—Eyes at the fingers' ends—*Chicane*—The daring pick-pocket—The fog and the repeater—The man of *business*—Efficacy of the punishment of death.

THE *Tireurs* first had the name of *floueurs*, under which title we shall class another sort of rogues, to whom it does not, however, so appropriately appertain ; for in the beginning, *floueurs* signified the persons who seek the *floue*, that is, a large assemblage of persons, a crowd.

The *tireurs*, or *voleurs à la tire* (anglice pickpockets), are those who abstract from people's pockets, purses, money, watches, snuff boxes, &c. &c. They are generally well covered, and have neither canes, nor gloves ; for not only do they require the liberty and free exercise of their hands, but also the finest delicacy of touch.

These gentlemen, of whom it would be unjust to say that they do not work with their ten fingers, generally carry on their trade three or four together. It is in crowds that they effect their designs, and therefore they frequent meetings, fêtes, balls, concerts, theatres, at the time of going in, and also at the termination. Their station is that where canes, coats, and umbrellas are left, because the throng is always at that spot. They attend churches also, but only at those times and seasons when some solemn ceremony attracts a large concourse of the faithful. They are on the look out for all rows and disturbances, and frequently begin, and always encourage them, either by pretended insult, or some other equally ingenious mode. There are *tireurs* who are accomplices with showmen. The

proprietor of the learned ass, which must be remembered by all Paris, was the father of a gang of pickpockets; when the ass began his tricks, the tireurs did not put their hands in their own pockets.

Ballad-singers, mountebanks, out-door conjurers, have nearly all alliances with these cut-purses, and participate in the profits of the spoil. In Paris there is not the smallest congregation of persons, or the most trifling disturbance, but the pickpockets throng there. These gentlemen are everywhere.

One day, whilst, with his hands in his pockets, an Englishman was observing the soldiers exercising on the parade, a little pickpocket named *Duluc* cut his watch riband. A minute afterwards the gentleman discovered that he had lost something, looked on the ground, then examined the watch riband, and although it was easy to perceive that he had been deprived of his seals, he searched his pockets and felt all about him from head to foot; at length, astonished at not finding what he had lost, he exclaimed, "*Goddem*, the devil has carried off my seals;" and whilst, from a carelessness of manner, he laughed as loud as his neighbours; the thief, with some of his comrades and accomplices, stood a few paces from him, imitating and mocking him.

Nothing is more easy to detect than a pickpocket; he never stands for a moment in any one place, he must be perpetually on the move, always coming and going. This mobility is necessary for him, because it increases his opportunities of looking persons in the face, and also to assure himself whether or no there is any booty. When a pickpocket approaches a crowd, he swings his hands about as if by chance, but contrives to strike them against the pocket or fob, that he may ascertain if they contain anything. If he thinks that it is worth the trouble of his emptying it, the two accomplices, whom the *prig* calls his *nonnes* or *non-neurs*, each take their post, that is to say as near as possible to the person who is to be *drawn*. They press and squeeze against him as if he were in a vice. whilst

endeavouring to conceal the hand of the operator. A watch or a purse may be the result of the attempt, and if so, it is instantly passed into the hands of an accomplice, the *coqueur*, who makes off with the booty as quickly as possible, carefully avoiding any appearance of hurry or anxiety.

One remark is very essential to make, namely, that at the end of any spectacle, after church, or at the termination of any meeting that has drawn together a large assemblage of persons, pickpockets seem desirous of returning against the stream of the crowd which is going out. Readers, you are warned; when you see one or more individuals attempting such a manœuvre, looking up in the air and pushing hard, be on your guard. It is neither on the safety-chain, nor the button of your fob that your dependence can or should be placed; they present no obstacles. Thieves are, on the contrary, quite contented that precautions of this kind should be adopted: they are the security of the citizen, he has a chain, his fob is thereby protected, he fears nothing, he does not think of attending to the safety of his watch, that would be a superfluous care; what can happen to it? The chain is cut, the button twisted off, and the watch disappears. Pickpockets have not the appearance even of touching it, but they have eyes at their fingers' ends.

However, there is a mode of setting at defiance all their art and subtlety; turn, that is to say, twist your watch fob; one or two turns are enough, and then you may set at naught the arts of the most *downy drawer*, however skilled in *abstracts*, and the talent of appropriating to himself the purse, watch, or snuff-box of another.

There was in Paris a thief of such incredible dexterity that he robbed without an accomplice. He placed himself in front of a person, put his hand behind him, and took either a watch or some other valuable. This species of thievery is called the *vol à la chicane*.

A fellow named Molin, alias *Moulin le Chapelier*,

being under the portico des Français,* was desirous of stealing a gentleman's purse: the sufferer, who was near the wall, thought he felt some one picking his pocket; Molin, full of presence of mind, effected his object in an instant, the purse was torn from the pocket, he opened it, and taking out a coin, asked for a ticket for the play. At the same moment the person robbed said to him,—

“But, sir, you have taken my purse, give it to me.”

“The devil I have,” replied Molin, with an air of affected surprise, “are you quite sure?” Then looking attentively at it, “By heavens! I thought it was mine. Oh! sir, I ask your pardon.”

At the same time he returned the purse, and all the bystanders were persuaded that he had done it involuntarily. This is being *fly*, or I know nothing about it.

At the time of the great fog, Molin and a *pal* named Dorlé were stationed at the environs of the Place des Italiens. An old gentleman passed, and Dorlé stole his watch which he passed to Molin. The darkness was so great that he could not discern if it were a repeater or not, and to ascertain this, Molin pressed down the spring: the hammer instantly struck on the bell, and by the sound the old man knew his watch, and instantly cried out,—

“My watch! my watch! pray restore me my watch, it belonged to my grandfather, and is a family piece.”

Whilst uttering these lamentations, he endeavoured to go in the direction whence the sound had proceeded, to get his watch again, as he expected and hoped to do. He came close up to Molin, who, under cover of the dense fog, put his hand, with the watch in it, close to the old gentleman's ear, and, pushing the spring again, said, whilst the watch was striking—

“Listen then to its sounds for the last time;” and with this cruel advice the two thieves then went away, leaving the worthy undone elderly to bewail his loss.

* A theatre at Paris.—TR.

The ancient *voleurs à la tire* cite still, as amongst the celebrated personages of their profession, two Italians, the brothers *Verdure*, the eldest of whom, convicted of forming one of a band of chauffeurs, was sentenced to death. On the day of execution, the younger, who was at liberty, wished to see his brother as he left the prison, and with several of his comrades took his station on the road. When thieves go out in the evening into a crowd they generally have a preconcerted word of alarm or summons, by which to call or distinguish their accomplices. Young *Verdure*, on seeing the fatal car, uttered his, which was *lirge*, to which the criminal, looking about him, replied *lorge*. This singular salute given and returned, it may be imagined that young *Verdure* retired. On his road he had already stolen two watches; he saw his brother's head fall from the block, and either before or afterwards he was determined to carry matters to their utmost.

The crowd having dispersed, he returned to the cabaret with his comrades. "Well, well," said he, laying down on the table four watches and a purse, "I think I have not played my cards amiss. I never thought to have made such a haul at my *frater's* death; I am only sorry he's not here to have his share of the *swag*."

What will the advocates for the punishment of death say to this? That it is efficacious, salutary? This is a powerful proof, certainly.

CHAPTER LXXII.

LES FLOUEURS*.

The money-finders—A good bottle of wine—The Saint-Jean—*Le verre en fleurs*—The money-balance and *la triomphe*.

THE *floueurs*, who should rather be termed the *joueurs*, go generally two or three together. One of them goes first, holding in his hand a twenty or forty-sous piece; and when he sees a man whose appearance bespeaks him a stranger—the cut of whose clothes, boots, and hat, the mode of whose hair, a complexion more or less hale, a gaping and inquisitive look, are the indices by which a *yokel* is easily distinguished; when, I say, a *floueur*, who is in advance, perceives these marks of rusticity, he lets the piece of money fall cleverly from his hand, and then stooping, picks it up in a way that the passenger must observe.

“Sir,” says the rascal, on rising up, “has this piece of money fallen accidentally from your pocket?”

“No, Sir,” is the reply of the stranger.

“Really, Sir, if it were worth more,” the swindler says, “I would offer you the half; but for such a trifle it is not worth while; if you will allow me, I will offer you a bottle of wine.”

If the stranger accepts the proposal, the thief puts his hand on his cravat, or else takes off his hat as if he were saluting some person. At this signal, which is called the *Saint Jean*, the accomplices precede him, and running forward, instal themselves in a cabaret, where they begin playing at cards.

An instant afterwards, the individual who is supposed to have found the piece arrives, with the stranger

* Anglice, ring-droppers.—Tr.

whom they propose to dupe ; they both sit down ; but the stranger is always so placed that he can perceive the cards of one of the players—an arranged manœuvre which attracts attention : the *flat* has seen it, or is directed to it by his *friend*, who tells him how badly the cards were played. Bets are laid on both sides ; the stranger is induced to take a part, which they let him do, and he is sure of winning his money. He takes the cards himself, and having put his cash into the hands of the man he entered with, which is very natural, because he is on the same side with himself, he plays ; but, by an incredible fatality, he loses, and then the sharpers, laughing, drink at the expense of the *suive* (flat), that is the name they give their prey. The trick on the cards by which these gentlemen conciliate fortune and ensure success, they call the *verre en fleurs*.

A simpleton who was noodled into going into one of these cabarets, on the *dropping rig*, saw the trick.

"Sacredieu!" he cried, "if I were allowed to bet, I would lay twenty sous that I would make the point!"

The bet was taken ; but before he began to play, the *suive* cried out—

"One moment, gentlemen, if you please ! short reckonings make long friends ;" and drawing from his pocket a money-balance, "I wish," he added, "to see if your louis are full weight ; I will answer for mine ; besides, as you will not win them, that must be indifferent to you."

He weighed the louis, which were deficient thirteen grains in all. He asked for three francs to be added ; and when the sum was made up, he played, lost, and remained perfectly stupified. The game was *la triomphe*, and he had king, queen, nine of trumps, and two other kings.

If we would not be duped we should not have a money-balance, and not be induced to go and drink

with strangers, and most decidedly not to play with them.

It is not, perhaps, inopportune to advise strangers, on their arrival at Paris, to clad themselves afresh from head to foot; it is the only mode of not becoming a point of attack to all sharpers. They should go to the sign of the *Ciseau volant*, and give orders to tailor, boot-maker, hatter, &c. &c.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

LES EMPORTEURS.

The gentlemen who lose themselves—The curiosities of Paris—The two cradles—The officious *Cicerone*—The member of the university and the rattle-snake.

THERE are in Paris individuals whom we see from morning till evening in the public way ; they have no determined object, but yet are continually promenading up and down the principal streets. They may also be frequently met in public places and at meetings of all sorts ; such as the Tuileries, the Palais Royal, the Jardin des Plantes, that of the Luxembourg, the Louvre, the Carousel, or the Place Vendôme, at the time of parade, the galleries of the Musée, and, in fact, everywhere that there are a great number of strangers and country people.

The sharpers I allude to are always clothed, if not elegantly, yet very neatly. They might be taken for merchants, or at least for men of business. These worthies hunt in leashes ; one of them goes on first, and on perceiving a stranger, (and with a little tact a stranger may be known at one glimpse,) he accosts him, inquiring very politely for some street which he knows to be in the immediate vicinity of the place in which he is.

The stranger of course replies, that he is not a resident in Paris ; then the swindler, taking the ball at the bound, says—

“ Nor am I ; it is, in fact, so very long since I was in the capital, that I am completely lost in the midst of the manifold changes that have been made here.”

On reaching the corner of the street, the “ lost gentleman ” reads the inscription, and cries out, “ Oh, this is the street ; I remember now.”

Whilst walking on beside the stranger, he enters into conversation ; and leading the subject to what is most curious at the moment in the way of sights, talks sometimes of the wardrobe, sometimes of the king's apartments ; at another period the theme is pictures, or some interesting exhibition ; at one time it was the coronation costume of Napoleon, at another the cradle of the King of Rome ; subsequently that of the Duc de Bordeaux ; again, the stage, the giraffe, the Algerine ambassador, or perchance the Chinese. In fact, whatever the bait may be, the sharper is going to procure a ticket for two persons, and not having any friend with him, he makes an offer to the stranger to accompany him.

It is either an officer of the guards, or a person of the Château, or some personage of consideration or rank, who has promised this ticket ; he is to meet him in a coffee-house close at hand, as appointed ; and he requests the stranger to go with him. Should consent be given, a preconcerted signal is forthwith made to the two accomplices, who form the rear-guard, to go forward. The coffee-house is not very distant ; the stranger and his companion speedily arrive there ; the latter goes to the bar, as if to inquire if the person whom he expected had arrived, and when he has done this, he invites the stranger to go up stairs into the billiard-room ; he soon follows, and says that his friend will very shortly arrive.

“ In the mean time,” he adds, “ let me offer you a small glass of something.”

The small glass is accepted, and they continue looking at the billiard players.

One of the players makes a fine stroke, which the *cicerone* points out to the stranger, the game goes on, and chance strokes are made every moment. The player who ought to win loses the game ; he does not care a rush, he says ; he would as soon lose as win ; his uncle's estates will pay for all ; besides, although he has lost some, there are others left behind quite as good,

and, so saying, he chinks the crowns in his pocket. A singular stroke presents itself, he induces the stranger to bet with him, and if he has the weakness to be tempted, farewell to his money.

The stranger is not always content with betting; sometimes taking a cue, he offers to play the one who looks like a booby; he piques himself on winning, and the more he does so, the surer is he of being plucked. The pretended bad player makes so many chance strokes, that he comes off conqueror at last. I know persons who, in this way, have lost from three to four thousand francs.

A member of the imperial university, M. Salvage de Faverolle, an old gentleman nearly eighty years of age, lost at it his two watches, a gold chain, a hundred double napoleons, and besides these a sum of six hundred francs, for which he gave a bill of exchange. He did not play, but, by way of intimidating him, they made him believe that he had betted. His *cicerone*, ere he had recognized him as being an old doctor, and amateur of natural history, had proposed to him to go and assist at some experiments about to be undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining the nature and effects of the poison of the rattle-snake.

"Well, the serpent, when shall we see it?" repeated M. Salvage, incessantly. "Oh, it will not be long first," replied the *cicerone*; "I am no less impatient than yourself to hear the rattles,"—and by the "*rattles*," he meant the rattle of the old gentleman's money.

The sharpers who thus fleeced him, have received the name of *emporteurs au billard*. On my accession to the police, the number of this class of rogues amounted to twenty-eight or thirty, they are now reduced to four-fifths of that number, and I may safely say, that the reduction was effected by myself. Those who now carry on the system are not rich, the others are dispersed, after detention longer or shorter in proportion to the nature of their offence. Before my time the *emporteurs au billard* were only punished administratively, that is

to say, arbitrarily. They were sent for a few months to Bicêtre, and on their quitting that prison, they were conducted by the gendarmerie to their own department. I was the first who quoted against these swindlers the use of the 405th article of the code. I was thought to be correct, and all those taken in the act were sentenced to three years' confinement. This severity, united to the divulging of their mode of proceeding, has powerfully contributed to purge the capital of them. The five or six *emporteurs*, who are still in Paris, may be compelled to abandon this sort of existence, as soon as it shall please the authorities—Why does it not please them at once? “Furthermore deponent sayeth not.”

CHAPTER LXXIV.

LES EMPRUNTEURS.

Travelling post—Portmanteau given in charge—The exordium—The aristocrats—The ingots—Splendid operation—What embarrasses, harasses—The deposit—The little soldier, and the madman of Cette—Brilliant and sapphires—M. Fromager—The twin sisters

BORROWING, in a way that partakes of swindling and robbery, is one of the most ingenious modes of appropriating to one's self the goods of another. Never did the *emprunteurs* make so much booty, as during the troubles of the Revolution, it was the season of their propitious industry, which they exercised in the following manner.

Two men of mature age travelled post, taking with them a third individual, who passed for their servant. These gentlemen had all the external appearance of opulence, elegant and gentlemanly look, polite manners, appropriate language, and the demeanour of noblemen. It was impossible not to believe them to be personages of consequence, and, moreover, persons of wealth, to judge by the way in which they lived. They only alighted at the first rate inns, or best lodging-houses; what most imported them was, that the landlord should be one of the reputed rich men of the country, and thus they always knew before hand the situation of his finances, and if he had not much ready money, they could at least build their hopes and form their plans on his credit. Under these considerations, the post-masters suited them to a turn.

Arrived at the place they had pitched upon, the two travellers ordered the best room; and whilst the house resounded with the orders given by these high and mighty dons, the pretended servant was employed in unloading the carriage and carrying his master's lug-

gage into the house. This operation was seldom effected but in presence of all the servants of the hotel : master, mistress, servants, stable-boy, cook, and even scullions, all are glad on such an occasion to have a look ; all have a tolerable sprinkling of curiosity, and these spectators aiding in the unpacking and unloading do not allow a single opportunity to escape them, by which they can obtain favourable or unfavourable conjectures of the new comers.

They assist to carry in the trunks that they may ascertain their weight ; they would not be sorry to lend a hand at the opening, and every portmanteau which they are forbidden not to touch, is for them a subject of mortal curiosity and inquietude ; they measure and weigh it with their eyes, and if it should seem heavy, or is it removed with any appearance of mystery, then is there a wide field open to conjecture. The new comers are wealthy as Cræsus, and have treasures in their train. Confidence of a boundless nature, complaisance, little attentions, all is bestowed on them : for them, they would one and all cut themselves into quarters. Cellar, kitchen, stable, and the whole house is revolutionized.

The travellers, whose habits I am about to describe, were not ignorant of how much importance and consideration might be a portmanteau, well secured and fastened. Their servant, who was the practical man in the business, and aided materially in forwarding their plans, pulls out with much difficulty from the boot or imperial, a sort of chest, whose size contrasted greatly with his efforts to lift it out.

“ By Gemini ! it does not contain feathers,” say the gazers.

“ I believe you,” replies the servant ; then turning to the host, hostess, or some one of the family, he stretches out his neck, adding, in a confidential tone, but so as to be clearly understood by every body, “ It is the cash !”

“ Let me help you, let me help you,” repeat five or six officious persons.

"Wait till they help you," says the landlord, coming forward to take a survey of the burden; and when the box is placed on the ground, they proceed to examine the fastenings, the workmanship of which they greatly admire.

Each makes his own reflections, but the most interesting to come at is that of the master; the servant of the gentleman has eyes and ears for everything, and if, at this period, when assignats alone constituted the public fortune, if the landlord allowed to escape him a gesture, a remark, a look, which betokened his love of specie, that look, remark, or gesture was the gauge by which they measured the extent to which they might tempt him.

If there were any chance of success, the travellers espied the propitious moment for the attack. One evening, when they were sure they had only kindness to expect, they begged the landlord or his wife, or both, to come into their apartment, and they attended the invitation with the utmost promptitude. Then one of the strangers said to the servant, "Comtois, leave us for a time," and as soon as he had retired the other stranger commenced the business.

"We live in a time when probity is so rare, that we ought really to esteem ourselves but too happy to meet with honest people. In coming to your house we have been extremely fortunate, and deem ourselves so. The reputation which you deservedly enjoy is to us a guarantee that we run no risk in confiding to you a secret which is to us of paramount importance. You know with how much ferocity the nobility are pursued; every man of rank or name is proscribed. We have also been compelled to fly our country to escape from the fury of the Revolutionists; they sought, and still seek, our lives and fortunes, and we have escaped with difficulty, and well for us that we have, or else, as matters now are, it would have been all over with us. At last, God be praised! we are, for a time, in safety, and with honest people."

This was the preamble, or exordium. After having stated it with all the solemnity of misfortune, the traveller made a pause, in the expectation that one of those questions would be asked which evince the degree of interest which the interrogator takes in your situation. If this was satisfactory, he resumed :—

“ You are not ignorant that cash and sterling money have disappeared from circulation, and that whosoever has any, conceals it with the greatest care, for fear of being apprehended and treated like an aristocrat. We possess a quantity of specie, as much as fifty thousand francs. Such a sum is embarrassing, and, the more easily to conceal it from inquiry, we have melted it ourselves, and made it into ingots. At this epoch we did not foresee that we should be compelled to exile ourselves instantly, so that at the moment of a precipitous departure we find ourselves almost without money. Up to this period a few louis from a reserve we made, has been sufficient for us, but we have not reached the termination of our journey by a great deal, and who knows how long a time may elapse during our absence! In this situation friends are indispensable to us, and ready money, for we cannot pay postboys with ingots. We could address ourselves to a goldsmith, but who will undertake to say that he will not denounce us? This fear has determined us on applying to you; you can serve us so far as to lend us on one or two ingots a sum of five or six thousand francs.”

It must here be noticed, that the sum asked for was always one that squared with the pecuniary means of the landlord.

“ It is not necessary to say, that in paying you back your capital, we will also add the interest. That is a matter of course. As to the period of this reimbursement, you shall fix it at your own convenience, and the time elapsed, if you want to make use of the ingots, do so without scruple or hesitation. We will give you a written authority, which shall entitle and empower you to act in this respect with full and perfect liberty.”

This home thrust being made, the innkeeper was still in a state of uncertainty as to the reply he should give, but soon the ingots taken from the small coffer were extended before his eyes. The lightest of them at least was of the value of the sum required as the loan, and instead of one they offered two. The guarantee was double the loan, money could not be put out with greater security, and then the chance of appropriating the pledge in case of non-payment was not a slight argument and consideration. It was not, then, extraordinary that the landlord should consent to do that which held out such tempting and brilliant advantages. However, it might happen that he refused, and then, as they had no doubt of his good will, they begged him to find in the vicinity some rich man who would loosen his purse-strings, for, rather than have recourse to a goldsmith, they were determined to make any sacrifices.

This was a delicate hint that they were content to pay excessively usurious interest, and the innkeeper soon found amongst his friends some obliging capitalist. The bargain was concluded, but before they took their money, the travellers, still adhering to their system of delicacy, requested that the standard of the gold might be verified.

"It is," said they to the lender, "as much for you as for ourselves; as we have melted louis, ducats, sequins, quadruples, and, in fact, all species of gold coin, we should be very glad, for your security as well as our own, to know what the metal really is."

The lender frequently was desirous of confiding entirely in the honour of the gentlemen, but they insisted on the assay. But how to contrive it without awaking the suspicion of the goldsmith to whom they should apply, was a matter of question. Each person gave his advice, but to all that was proposed there was some objection or difficulty raised. The sagacity of the assembly was nearly at a dead stand-still, when suddenly one of the sharpers became inspired; "Oh, *parbleu*," he cried, "we are at the ass's bridge; nothing

can be more easily accomplished without in any way putting the jeweller in our confidence; let us file one of the ingots, the first that comes, and we will have the filings assayed.

This expedient was deemed excellent by the unanimous voice of the assembly, and the lender immediately began to file the ingot, the precious grains of which were collected in a paper left purposely on the table. The operation done, the *emprunteurs* wrapped up the filings. This was the decisive moment; they made up the packet, but during these movements, for the paper into which had fallen only brass filings, they substituted another exactly similar, which contained the filings of gold of twenty-two carats. This the lender took to the goldsmith's to have it assayed, and returned speedily with a smiling countenance, and rubbing his hands like a man satisfied with his day's work.

"Gentlemen," said he, on entering, "it is standard of the best quality, and therefore the business is done: I will give you the cash you require, and you will have the kindness to give me the ingots."

"Of course; but as in this world we do not know who may die or who may live, to avoid all dispute, we think it will be most fitting to shut them up in this box, (a box is always at hand,) on which both parties shall place their seal, and then this will be more convenient for us, in case we should not claim it ourselves; in exchange for a small acknowledgment, which you will be so kind as to give us, you will give the box to any person we may send for it; all is settled, and the party fetching it will know nothing of the contents."

The acknowledgment was thus expressed:—

"I declare that I have in my possession a box, which I will return, on the presenting of this note, to the person who will pay me the sum of ———."

This corroborated the so essential precaution of placing on the seals which was to be the guarantee that they would not examine the ingots. Thus the sharpers had time to reach another part of the country,

where under the favour of incognito, they began their manœuvres, which they varied according to place and circumstance.

The industry of the *emprunteurs* did not perish with the assignats; only to attain the same ends, new modes have been devised and put into execution. We shall have proof of this in the following fact.

Two robbers of this class, FRANCOIS MOTELET, alias *le Petit Soldat* (the little soldier) and an Italian, FELICE CAROLINA, alias the *Fou de Cette*, had had made, for the sum of thirty-five thousand francs, an ornament of brilliants and sapphires. With this and an invoice they went to Brussels, where they knew an old goldsmith retired from business, the Sieur TIMBERMAN, who was said to lend money on pledges. They went to find him at his house in the Rue des Sablons, and asked the loan of twenty thousand francs on the ornament. Timberman looked attentively at the gems, and when he had ascertained the value, he declared he would not lend more than eighteen thousand francs upon it. This the *emprunteurs* accepted, and the pledge was immediately put in a box, on which each placed his seal. The eighteen thousand francs were counted out; deduction of interest was made before hand by way of certainty, and the *Petit Soldat* and the Italian returned to Paris. Two months afterwards they took a second journey to Brussels. The period fixed for the redemption of the jewels having arrived, they did so punctually, and Timberman was delighted with their exactitude, so much so, that on returning the ornament, which he did with regret, he offered them any service that was in his power to perform. These offers were well received, and they promised him that, should they again need a loan upon security, he should have the preference; and we shall see that, in making this promise, the gentlemen *emprunteurs* had resolved not to address any other person but him, although, according to custom, he had made them pay pretty well for the money lent.

In Paris there is a jeweller who, for forty years, has the exclusive privilege of furnishing jewels to the kings, queens, princes, and princesses, who have sparkled on the different theatres of Europe. In all parts of his shop shine most splendidly the diamond, the emerald, the sapphire, the ruby. Golconda includes less treasure, but it is all pure illusion; in the magic of their splendour they want the ideal of real value, and all these hues, so rich in the enchantments of colour, are but the sterile productions of deceitful reflexion: but no matter, at first sight nothing so much resembles truth as a lie, and the proprietor of these wonders, M. Fromager, was so skilful in his imitations, that unless a person be a real connoisseur, he will be deceived, and take the false composition for a veritable gem. The Italian and the Petit Soldat had no sooner been the possessors of the ornament worth thirty-five thousand francs, than, just appreciators of the talent of M. Fromager, they went to his warehouse, and ordered a duplicate. With the model before him the imitative jeweller went to work, and executed a perfect chef-d'œuvre: on confronting the two ornaments it was impossible not to take them for two sisters; it was not simply the air of a family that he had given to it, you would have declared that they were twin sisters, in fact they were made for either of them to play the part of Sosia, even in the presence of a lapidary who did not examine too closely.

The Petit Soldat and his friend the Italian were not sorry to know that even M. Timberman might be mistaken. They set out again for Brussels, and again pawned the elder sister for the same sum. Ten days afterwards the Petit Soldat presented himself to the usurer, and telling him that he came to redeem his jewels, counted out the money to him, and the box containing the gem was placed in his hands. After having broken the strings and seals, he opened it, as if to assure himself of the identity of the pledge: but whilst the Jew was trying if the money were good, for the box which

contained the elder sister he substituted one precisely similar, containing the younger sister, and placed it on the desk, whilst he secretly and quickly slid the other into a side pocket, in the lining of an ample cloak.

The Petit Soldat was about to return, and had already began to take leave of M. Timberman, when the Italian entered with alarm in his face, and, accosting his friend, said—"Ah, my dear fellow, what bad news I have for you! the two drafts which you sent to M. Champon at Ghent, have not been paid, and they require you to take them up instantly: you know they amount to seven thousand francs."

"What an awkward circumstance."

"Ah! my God! there is no way of meeting them but by leaving the jewel in the hands of M. Timberman; we can come for it in a few days."

"Just as you please, my sons," said Timberman; "speak before I open my chest: which I shall keep, the money or the jewels?"

"The jewels," said the Petit Soldat. The box was tied and sealed up, and the two swindlers went away, carrying the eighteen thousand francs.

Some months afterwards, M. Timberman, weary of waiting for the *emprunteurs*, who did not return, broke open the seals of the box. Alas! the brilliants and sapphires had vanished, they were transformed into paste, the gold had been metamorphosed into copper, but the workmanship was admirable.

Jewellers, trinket sellers, diamond dealers, &c., cannot be too much on their guard against the young sister. I know more than four persons who have been robbed nearly in the same way as the usurer at Brussels. Sharpers, whose inventions are fertile, devise this stratagem to-day, and another to-morrow. One that generally answers their purpose is the following:—They enter a shop to purchase some article of value; the selection is soon made; they pitch on something valuable, and capable of going into a small compass,

and in two words the bargain is concluded. Unfortunately, they have not about them the necessary sum; they will return; but as they wish to complete the purchase, and to make certain that their selection is not changed, they request the chosen article may be put in a box, tied up, and sealed with their own seal. The shopkeeper, blinded by the earnest paid down, accedes to the proposition, but forgets to watch his customer's fingers. What is the consequence? They tie up and seal a substituted box, whilst that containing the property descends into the pocket of the sharper, who will return at Easter or Trinity. Trinity passes away! the shopkeeper has the caution-money, and loses ninety per cent. He then remembers, that the day on which he had transacted this superb bit of business was on a Saturday, and that he had not taken handsel during the week.

Since our neighbours on the other side of the water have become enamoured of the climate of France, it has been incessantly overrun (in every sense) by a multitude of originals, who think to escape the spleen by flying from the banks of the Thames. These *milords*, so loaded with ennui, are hailed at all the inns with pleasure, because they are supposed to be made of guineas. They are whimsical, fantastic, capricious, cross, and difficult to please. Never mind; they do not pretend to perceive it; nay, on the contrary, they are only the more anxious to please, and fly to anticipate their desires; and the more impenetrable, mysterious, and even absurd they are, the more efforts are made to comprehend and please them. The guineas! the guineas!—how they make an innkeeper smile! how many smiles can they extort from all the innkeepers throughout the world!

The reception they give to the roughest looking person when properly announced, must necessarily be remarked by the sharpening gentry, who are naturally observers, and know how to reap a harvest from the observations they make. It may not be uninteresting

to the reader to learn how much profit these sharpers, who feed on the credulity of the human race, can realize by a feigned originality of conduct.

Figure to yourself, reader, a gentleman and his French or Italian servant, whom he calls *John*, in that tone at once solemn, brief, harsh, and with that imperiousness of a master who allies to despotic manners a well evinced disgust of life. The gentleman alights from his post-chariot. The rim of his black cap carefully folded down below his ears, he appears suffering and morose, and scarcely condescends to make a sign. He crosses the yard without looking at anything; and in his total carelessness does not even perceive that the long furred cloak in which he is enveloped brushes along the pavement, and that the female servants ranged along the passage are nice looking girls. All is indifferent, uncomfortable, insupportable;—he does not turn back to look, but once, and that is to ascertain whether John follows with the bottle of *soda-water*, and the precious necessary of health, namely the *New London Portative Apothecary* *, without which no man of consequence, unless he would be a self-slaughterer, can go from home even for a distance of four miles. His conduct is already a little singular; but added to his costume, his manners, and a variety of other particulars, he quickly becomes ridiculous; and three hours have not elapsed from the arrival of the

* We copy literally from the literal M. Vidocq, who seems rather at fault, not only in his caricature but his orthography. His knowledge of the English character is about as correct as his acquaintance with the language. John, with a "*new portative apothecary*" under his arm, must indeed be a sight in Paris; we should stare somewhat even in London. M. V. has forgotten to say whether the "*portative apothecary*" was labelled round the neck with "*Before taken to be well shaken,*" or any other appropriate direction. The "*homme comme il faut*" described in the text, was doubtless what Theodore Hook calls a "*Buccaneer,*" in every sense of the word.—TR.

gentleman until the whole household consider him as an amusing character.

"Who is your master?" says the landlord to John; "he is a regular Ostrogoth; he is more sad than passion-week, says nothing, and roars like a bull. I have seen many of your Englishmen, but never had one who exacted so much. Why, we are always obliged to be running after him. He wants, and he don't want; he orders, and counter-orders. Is he sick or mad?"

"Do not talk to me of it," says John, who is an egregious chatterer; "my master, such as you see him, is the best man in the world, but you must know how to take him. I have travelled about with him for these four years; before he never could keep a servant with him, but I have contrived to stay, and 'faith I am not sorry for it, now that I know his ways and how to please him."

"Ah, you have travelled with him these four years, eh?—and where the deuce are you now going?"

"Where are we going?—ask him where he is going; why he does not know himself! We go to-day here; to-morrow there. He says he means to settle himself, and we are moving about every day."

"By this account, then, it must cost him a great deal of money?"

"Oh, yes! I would wish no better fortune than the *pour boires* that I have given to the postilions."

"He is rich, then?"

"Rich!—why he does not know his wealth! I do not remember how many thousand pounds sterling he has to spend every day."

"The devil!—you should get him to stay here; the country is delightful; besides, he will meet with admirable company. Then we want for nothing: woods for hunting; if he likes fishing, we have a river full of fish; meadows, fields, vineyards, orchards; the theatre all the year round; we have assembly-rooms, excellent actors, and a most delightful ball very often. M. the

Maréchal —— has a château in the environs; Madame the Comtesse de —— has her's quite near! the Duc de —— generally passes the summer months here; then the Marquis de ——, General ——, Chevalier ——, not mentioning M. the Mayor, and Madame his lady, where there is a *conversazione* twice a-week at least. Oh, there are innumerable amusements! The literary circle, where they discuss and read all the newspapers; the society of agriculture and emulation, which has the honour of including amongst its members the most talented men in the country; most magnificent walks; a vaccine establishment; one of the most beautiful churches in the kingdom; concerts; most splendid winter balls; a Tivoli and serenade in summer; a musical mass all the year round, and on grand fêtes, processions in which no one can be weary with admiring the beauty of our young girls. There's amusement enough, I hope. We have, moreover, most extensive barracks, large enough to contain at least two thousand cavalry; forage of the best quality; brilliant coffee-houses; adorable lemonade makers; and billiards as at Paris. For an amateur, or any one that knows how to handle a cue, I assure you it is not to be despised: we have first-rate crack-players. I forgot to tell you that the officers of the garrison are the most amiable cavaliers that can be met with. During the four years you have travelled, have you met with many towns like this? Let me add, that it is the chief city of the department, and that we have everything within ourselves: a police-office, tribunal of the *première instance*, justice of peace, court of assize, executions; a bishopric, a college, mutual instruction, school of industry, elections, an hospital equalled but by few, capuchins, penitents, jesuits, a fair that lasts fifteen days, and a thousand other amusements of the same kind, which, to detail at length, would be fatiguing to me and tiresome to you."

"The picture you present is very attractive, and if

my master were like other men, I have no doubt but that it would suit him to make some stay here. But you must know that master is perpetually complaining of his health."

"Is that all? our doctors practise on the plan of Broussais, and we have most delicious leeches."

"Delicious leeches! Ah, but the air! it's always the air that my master is talking about."

"The air is excellent: we never have any persons sick."

"I thought you had an hospital!"

"Yes, for the poor, but else we should never die unless we were killed."

"Your doctors follow the plan of Broussais—the leeches are delicious—the air is excellent. Now, let us talk of the water. Oh! the water! the water! that is my master's deity."

"Well, then, I defy the whole world to produce finer, clearer, purer."

"And the wine!"

"Exquisite!"

"You have fresh eggs?"

"We have pullets and fowls of our own, that lay whenever they are bidden."

"Milk, and butter?"

"To be sure, in abundance, and of the very finest sort."

"Roast-beef, (*ros-biff*) and beef-steak, (*biff-stek*) are they also among the produce of the country?"

"Our oxen are enormous!"

"Really, your country is a little earthly paradise. You inspire me with a desire of remaining here. Ah! if monsieur could partake of my enthusiasm! But we must not think of such a thing. Every thing wearies, every thing fags, every thing annoys him. We have traversed together the four corners of the globe; Europe, Asia, Africa, America. No picturesque situation, no mountain, torrent, lake, abyss, volcano, cascade which we have not visited. Not a horror of nature

which has not had the privilege of attracting us; he arrived, looked, yawned, and said—‘*Let us go on to another, John,*’ and we went.”

After this conversation, John goes to inquire if his master wants him. Instantly rumour, with her hundred tongues, spreads through the hotel that the traveller is a *milord*—that he possesses incalculable riches, but is a most eccentric personage. The host, however, would not be sorry to retain him as his guest: he gives every one their lesson, and the hostess has constantly on her lips a smile, and on her tongue, veneration.

An universal increase of respect and attention is prescribed, and the domestics have orders to have ears and legs only for *milord*. This order given, John was not slow in descending

“ I think,” said he, “ that to-morrow we shall take a short walk round the vicinity. My master has desired me to awake him early: he is not so melancholy as usual: if these blue devils would but leave him! but no; it is a spectre that haunts him, and in five minutes, perhaps, he will change his mind: there is no reliance on him.”

In the evening *milord* has for his supper two fresh eggs and a glass of water. Next morning he breakfasts on a glass of water and two fresh eggs. He is sober, and the least eater in the world; but then he is on a regimen. As for John, it is another matter. He eats mutton cutlets, and dispatches bottles of wine in a twinkling.

The repast terminated, they go out for the excursion projected the previous evening, and do not return till after sunset. *Milord*, wonderful to relate, salutes the hostess; he appears less atrabilious than in the morning; he utters two other words of compliment with surprising affability: he is a bear commencing his lesson in humanity. Some of the wrinkles are effaced from his brow, the black cap is not pulled so completely over his eyes. Happy effect! incontestable evidence of the salubrious influence of the place on the hypocondriasis

of milord : John cannot make out the cause of such a sudden alteration : but are they not the first indices of an amelioration, which will be attended with still better symptoms ?

Milord asks for *ros-biff*, with half-a-dozen French dishes : he tastes of the best binns in the cellar : has rum in his coffee, tea in his rum : rum in his tea : goes to bed and goes to sleep. John is overjoyed : either his master will recover, or will soon die. Devouring the relics of the rich repast, he talks of the miracle that has been wrought, and each and every one, in the hope of keeping a guest like milord, unites in the joy of his servant.

Milord awakes, and has passed a most comfortable night : for a long time he had not tasted so much of the sweets of repose. In the intoxication of the improved state of feeling which he had obtained, he orders the landlord to be summoned to him, and John descends the stairs four at a time.

“ Either I am greatly mistaken, or things have taken an entire change : my master is gay as a lark to-day : I never saw him so before. ‘ John,’ said he to me, ‘ we will not go away from here. Be so kind as to request *monsieur l’auberge* to come up to me as early as possible.’ Perhaps milord will instal himself at your house. I can tell you that you would be no loser by him.”

“ Do you really think so ?”

“ It would be a fortune for you. I know not what he wants to say to you, but whatever arrangement he may propose, accept ; that is, if my advice has any influence with you. The main point is not to contradict him.”

“ You must know that these Englishmen sometimes have strange ideas——”

“ But milord is generous, and whenever he stops any where, I can assure you he makes every one sensible of it.”

“ Good : I am glad you have given me this intimation : thanks, M. John.”

The innkeeper obeys the command of milord with alacrity, and presents himself before him in a most respectful attitude, that is to say, with a smiling countenance, his arms hanging down in front of his breeches, and his head uncovered.

"Milord desired to speak with me?"

"Yes, yes; take a seat (*brancard*,) monsieur l'hôte."

The host does not comprehend, but John arrives: "My master," he says, "invites you to be seated; take a chair."

"Yes, yes, a chair," (*fauteuil*), resumes the illustrious stranger, who then went on to say, "I wish to come to terms with you, and make some arrangement for my residing here with comfort, and to beg you to inform me at once what money will be necessary for me to give you for eating, sleeping, lodging, firing, boarding: I shall have four horses, ten dogs for fox-hunting, four servants besides John, my carriage, and myself*."

* It may be requisite, in order to account for the crassitude of the host's comprehension, to give milord's speech entire, from the original, as a specimen of the English mode of speaking French, as laid down by M. Vidocq.—Tr.

"Jes jes un fauteuil ché valé avec vo condichonner, un rangement por loge mo-a de confertachèn, et ché valé vo tote suite donner à mo-a solouchaine so l'argent qué vo avez nécessaire, por faire manché, cuché, loché, chauffé, *planchir*, d'apord quatre chevaux à mo-a, disse dogues por le chasse du fox, quatre John encore, ma carosse, et mon seignorie."

"Réflechen, né pas reflechen, parlez incontinent."

"Quinze mille francs—ah! prâve homme—lé probité à vo, il mérite devanteiche, et le probité a mo-a il commande avec l'estime de vo, ene gratificachein relative a mon bienveillance nous autres habitants de la Grand Britaine, nous avons continuellement oune calcoulachen de tête et oune calcoulachen de l'âme. Le calcoulachen de tête est l'économy, le calcoulachen de l'âme le liberality; vo avez entendement, mossio l'hôte! l'economy dit quinze, lé libérality, il dit vingt avec cinq encore, vingt-cinq."

"Non pas bonty, le resideince à votre auperche, elle etait

The innkeeper did not know what reply to make, but John, who saw his embarrassment, stood forward as interpreter to his master.

"My master inquires how much it will cost him per annum at your house for the board and lodging, first of his lordship, then for five servants, four horses, and

bocop rejoissante por ein anclaise : matame à vo charmante ein verity, petite l'enfant à matame, interessante family ; bocop espiegle, ché lé aimais bocop ; ah—mo-a aussi petite l'espiegle dans mon jouesse, vo riez mossio l'auperche. Ah ! vo michantes ne pas rire."

"Vo avez encore des femmes de chambre dont lé acacery, les oill black et lé pomme roge de figoure et les gros mamelles me plaisent veridiquement. Votre departement il mé a enchanté ; cholis collines, cholis côteaux, cholis boccages, cholis rifages, cholis qui coule, cholis sorces, le eau était oune, bonne potache. Vo avez en vo city oun society dé hytrophiles ?"

"Ah ! donmaiche, dommaiche ! vo francaisse pas connaitre richesse de son contry—dans le Ancleterre, les hytrophiles il était lé piveurs de l'eau— ; mo-a président souperior de société des hytrophiles—, ché vol faire vo hytrophile."

"Partonnez, partonnez vo bon hytrophile, John, rappelez à mo-a por faire hytrophile mossio : savez vo, mossio l'auperche, que vo avez oun soleil tot-à-fait à mon fantasie, oune molt plaisant naturalité de situachen sor la terre, oun zephir tres appétissante per la dijérement, avec dans le haut oune perpetoualle agréabiliti de perspective dé séchour dé pienhoreux. Por tote ces ravissement qui guérirai à mo-a mon melancoli, ché donne à vo vingt cinque mille francs, repondez, vo prénez vingt cinque mille francs ?"

"Ah, vo acceptez."

"Vo volez faire contente mo-a ? ah, John, donnez mon trésory dé voyage."

"Vo avez oune armoire."

"Ah, vo avez oune armoire ! mo-a ché le casquette de la coton, ché metté dans lé interne de loui mille et encore cinque cent franque, vo por equality dans le même interne mettez aussi franque cinque cent et encore mille, en motoual security, dans lé armoire a vo ché mette en preïson casquette à mo-a. le preïson il demeure avec vo, et le cié il marche avec mo-a : au-

the dogs with which he will amuse himself in hunting the fox."

"That requires reflection."

"Reflection, no reflection, speak at once."

"Well then, sir, are fifteen thousand francs too much?"

"Fifteen thousand francs—ah, good man! your honesty deserves more, and my honour commands, from its esteem of you, a recompense compensate with my good feeling towards you. We inhabitants of Great Britain have perpetually a calculation of the head and a calculation of the heart. The calculation of the head is economy, the calculation of the heart, liberality; you understand me, landlord? Economy says, fifteen; liberality says, twenty, with five added to it, twenty-five."

"You are too good, milord."

"Not at all; a residence at your inn is very delight-

jourthui mon seigneurie quitte vo por huitte jour, vo garde lachement à mon frais et si le finichein de mois il vienne, la seconde jorne morte à la principe dé souivante, ne pas voir ma retourne, vo force lé preïson et rende le liberty a lé réciproque indemnity per personnal avantage a vo : mo-a rétourne vo né plous voloir, mo-a trappe indemnity ein legitime compensachen ; et John il feisait sa petite profit."

"Ah ! vo volez faire plaisir à mo-a?"

"Allez, allez, mossio l'auperche, allez, faites plaisir à mo-a."

"C'était vo, vo avez lé contribuchen?"

"Vo venez metté à la bonnette, ah brave, brave—"

"Chetez dans le profond d'abord l'or a mo-a."

"Ah mossio l'auperche, vo cageinez à mo-a bocop de peine vo me faites injori por le manifestachen de confiance que ché mette en l'integrity de vo : chetez votre contingent sans nombrement aucune."

"Mossio l'auperche apportez le doble dépôt."

"Tendez le depot."

"A present lé eimbargo il est sur l'argent."

"Cliques, claque, bon train postillone ; creve la cheval, et né pas casse cou a mo-a, le recompense est au bout."

ful for an Englishman ; your wife is a charming woman, and so is the little infant, and your interesting family, clean, lively children ; I like them much. Ah, I was lively in my younger days ; you laugh, landlord—ah, you may ! Don't laugh."

"Milord, I will not take so great a liberty."

"You have two maid servants, whose little winning ways, black eyes, red cheeks, &c., please me very much. Your department has perfectly enchanted me ; fine hills, fine seats, fine woods, fine banks, fine streams, fine fountains, the water is a real treat. Have you in your town a society of water-lovers (hydrophilists)?"

"I do not think, milord, that there are any hieroglyphics in the country."

"Ah, what a pity, what a pity ! You Frenchmen do not know the worth of your own country. In England the hydrophilists, who are water-drinkers—I am president of the society of hydrophilists. I will make you a hydrophilist."

"Milord, I do not deserve so much honour from your lordship's hands."

"Pardon me, pardon me, my excellent hydrophilist ; John, remind me that I make him a hydrophilist. Do you know, innkeeper, that you have a sun precisely to my mind ; one of the most pleasant situations on earth, an air extremely beneficial for digestion, and from the hills there is a perpetually agreeable prospect, which will make my residence here comfortable. For all these charms, which will cure my melancholy, I give you twenty-five thousand francs. Tell me, will you take twenty-five thousand francs ?"

"Your generosity, milord, exceeds my pretensions."

"Oh, you accept my offer, then ?"

"I will do all in my power to make your lordship contented."

"You will make me contented, ah ! John, give me my travelling money-bag."

John takes from the secretary an enormous bag, and gives it to his master, who takes from it a handful of

gold pieces; which he piles in heaps of a hundred francs on the table, and when fifteen piles are made, milord gives the bag to John, and asks him for a cotton cap. This is the finale which denotes a fine stroke of originality. Certainly the landlord asks no better than to have at his house a boarder who pays as generously as milord; however, his lordship requires not only that the bargain, by virtue of which he and his people are to be fed and boarded for a year, should be put down in writing, but also wishes that a penalty should be added, as guarantee of the execution.

"You have a strong box?" he inquires of the host.

"Yes, milord."

"Ah, you have a strong box! I have a cotton cap in which I have put, in louis, a thousand and five hundred francs; for your part put also within it five hundred francs and a thousand in louis, as a mutual security; put the cotton cap containing the two amounts into your strong box, and give me the key; to-day I shall go away for a week, you will keep on the lodging at my expense, and if, when the end of the next month comes, and the second day of the following month, I am not returned, break open the prison and set at liberty the mutual indemnity for your own private advantage. If we return, you will of course restore me the cap with the indemnity, and John will have some little consideration out of it."

The proposal was not very clear, but John undertook to be the interpreter.

"Milord," he says, making signals to the innkeeper to give full and entire consent, "milord will deposit fifteen hundred francs in this cap; you must deposit an equal sum, and the three thousand francs will be shut up in a strong box, of which milord will keep the key. Milord is going away for a week on some indispensable business, but you will not dispose of his apartment before the third of the next month; if at this time we are not here again, you can have the box opened, and the three thousand francs will be yours. If,

on the contrary, we do return, and you do not wish to be held to your bargain, you will return the cap and contents, and the affair is settled. I presume that you will not object to place your share in the cap; but milord is in the habit of taking such precautions."

"Since it is milord's way, I am ready to comply."

"Ah, you will do what I wish?"

"Yes, milord, I only wish to have permission to go and get the money."

"Go, go, landlord, and oblige me in what I ask."

The aubergiste descends, and John, going after him, catechises him well: he advises him to strike while the iron is hot, and so well plays he his cards, that instead of fifteen hundred francs the innkeeper would give double. Either from his own hoards or from his neighbours he procures the sum in a very short time, and then going quickly up stairs, carrying the pieces of gold according to John's advice, he sees milord with his cloak on, walking up and down.

"Well, have you got the requisite sum?"

"Yes, milord, I have come to put it in the cap."

"You will put it in the cap; oh, very good, very good."

He takes the cotton cap, and holding it open with both his hands, says, "Throw in first my gold."

The landlord throws in successively the fifteen piles that are on the table, and that done, he sets about proving that he does not fail in an obolus of his quota.

"Ah, landlord, you give me much pain, you do me an injury by your manifestation of the confidence which I have placed in your integrity; throw in your amount without counting them one by one."

The landlord, faithful to the private instructions given to him by John, deposits his gold in the cap, and as soon as the two sums are placed together, milord ties them up with a riband, then walking gravely towards the strong box, he says,—

"Landlord, bring the double deposit."

The landlord obeys, and milord mounts a chair to

reach the top shelf, "Give me the deposit," and with his eyes elevated to the top place in the cupboard, the host gives the cap to milord; but whilst, with a shrug of the shoulders, John gives the good man a smile of approbation, by an expert manœuvre of his right hand the master puts the bag into his left hand, and instantly seizes from under his cloak a second cap, exactly like that which he has caused to disappear. The exchange made, the ascensional movement (the interruption of which has not been perceived) continues, and, when effected, the landlord is quite sure that his fifteen hundred francs are with those of milord. Milord is quite sure of the same thing.

"Now the embargo is laid on the money."

He gives a double turn with the key, descends from the chair, asks for his purse, pays without a murmur at the bill, bids every body farewell, and gets into his carriage with his faithful John.

"Drive away a good pace, postilion; never mind the horse, but do not break my neck: I will pay you."

"Take milord over the best sides of the road," shrieks out the innkeeper, who trembles lest any accident should happen to milord.

"Good heavens," said his wife, "I hope milord will not perceive the bad state of the roads! fortunately they are dry."

"Yes, but the dust."

"Why did you not put in the carriage a bottle of your syrup of lemon?"

"Never thought of it."

"What a woman you are, you never do anything like another woman. Postilion, postilion! Mr. John, milord; bah! they are off like shot. Heaven," says in petto the complaisant landlord, "guide the coursers that carry Cæsar and my fortune!!!"

Milord not arriving at the end of three months, the aubergiste for fear of offending him, waits six weeks longer; this lapse of time passed away he resolves to

take off the *embargo*; the door of the strong box is forced, there is the cap, he takes it down, unties the string, and finds—what?—forged coin.

Sablin, who played the Englishman to perfection*, was a master of this kind of robbery. One day he carried off in this way five thousand francs from an innkeeper: this latter was not a Greek, although he lived at Troyes: his Troyes was in Champagne.

* Certainly, if the above be a specimen of his talents! TR.

CHAPTER LXXV.

LES GRECES OR SOULASSES.

The pigeon—the pieces of gold—the case—the forgotten key—the bullets.

THE grèces are generally countrymen, who are incessantly on the move, either in the diligences or on foot; they always assume the appearance best suited to enable them to effect their designs on the persons whom they intend to make their prey and exercise their experiments upon.

They generally go in parties of three; each travelling alone to seek for "*flats*:" sometimes, to be sure, one goes on the hunt and the others await him at the head-quarters.

As soon as the *grèce* who has the charge of forming an acquaintance meets with the individual on whom he thinks he can play off a successful manœuvre, he endeavours to get on terms of intimacy with him, and when he has got from him the particulars of his condition, if he perceives any chance of plucking his feathers, he goes and lodges in the same house or inn with his new formed friend, waiting patiently until opportunity shall present itself of effecting his projected purpose.

If the pigeon whom he seeks to unplume has come to receive any money, or brought goods to Paris, the *grèce* does not lose sight of him until he has received what he expects. Very frequently, that they may be more certain that the products of the sale shall not escape their clutches, they arrange to buy the goods themselves, or at least to facilitate their disposal.

The spy posted near the *pigeon* to watch his measures gives his accomplices an account of every motion as soon as made. He gives them, in some sort, hour

after hour, the bulletin of his actions, and when he thinks that it is time to be up and doing, he warns them to be in readiness to second his plans.

The moment fixed for the perpetration of the scheme having arrived, under some pretext or other the *grèce* induces the *pigeon* to go out with him: they go into the streets together, but scarcely have they advanced a few paces, when a man, whose accent denotes him to be a stranger, accosts them, and makes them comprehend that he wants to find his way to the Palais Royal.

“What do you want there?” inquires the *grèce*. The man shows several pieces of money, generally large coin, or Italian pieces of forty-francs, and, manifesting a desire to get them changed, he gives an account, of which this is the sum and substance:—

He was in the service of a very rich man, who died and left him a vast number of these pieces, the value of which he is ignorant of; all he knows is, that, when he changes it, they give him five white pieces. Immediately, to show the sort of white pieces, he pulls out a hundred sous piece. At the same moment, the *grèce*, taking from his pocket six pieces of five francs each, proposes to the domestic that he shall give him the gold coin for them; to which he assents, apparently very well satisfied, and in his language gives him to understand, that he should not be sorry to have more white money.

A money-changer's shop cannot be established in the open air, they therefore enter a cabaret, and there the stranger, with pieces of gold, opens a case containing a hundred, which he offers for thirty francs each.

The *grèce*, *aside* to the *pigeon*, does not fail to remark how advantageous it would be to them to make such a bargain, adding,—“But, before we conclude the bargain, I think it only cautious to show the pieces to a goldsmith, in order to ascertain if they be good.”

The *pigeon* thinks with his companion. He goes

out with one of the pieces, and returns with forty francs which he has received in exchange. There can be no further doubt; the thing is safe; the profit very considerable: ten francs for each piece: he cannot have too many on such terms, and without hesitation, he gets rid of all his white money. If he has not enough, he is ready to borrow. At last the exchange is effected. They count the pieces of gold, and put them back into the case: but the pretended servant, who is an expert juggler, substitutes for the case containing the precious metal, one exactly similar, and after this legerdemain, as it is necessary to go away as speedily as possible, he says, since they have assayed his gold, he also wishes to examine the silver they have given him.

"Of course," observes the pigeon's Mentor, "there can be no objection to that;" and the pigeon, whom the hopes of excessive profit has made half mad, consents, with the best grace in the world, to the carrying off of his hundred sous pieces. What risk does he run? is not the case his guarantee?

The servant has disappeared, and the companion of the dupe, under pretence of some want, goes out for a moment, as he says, and joins his *pal*.

The pigeon is plucked: he will never see them again. As yet he is ignorant of his misfortune.—He waits ten minutes—twenty minutes—half an hour—an hour; at first he grows impatient, then begins to get fidgety, then disquieted, then come suspicions, and the utmost alarm. He opens the case, or has it forced if it have a secret spring, and finds within only pence or bullets. Sometimes the grèces, instead of a case, have a tin box or a small leathern bag with a padlock to close it.

When the pigeon appears somewhat distrustful, the two sharpers have recourse to a different system of tactics. He who has cleared the way, takes the cash from the hands of the other, and says, placing it in the hands of the *flat* he is trying to catch, "We will go to the changers to examine the coin."

The pigeon, thinking that his friend advises him cautiously, immediately goes out with him, leaving the pretended servant in the cabaret. They walk together, when suddenly the sharper stops, and, as if struck with an idea, says, "The key, the key of the case, have you got it?"

"No."

"No! quick then, run and fetch it,—or stay, I will go myself; wait here."

The thief has no sooner gone away, than he joins his comrade, who has also left the rendezvous. If by some chance the pigeon will not quit his friend, the friend walks on with him until an opportunity offers of absconding, which he does down some passage of elsewhere.

The *exchange* is a mode of swindling by which many persons have been taken in. Country dealers, travellers, even Parisians have lost considerable sums. The more the simpleton, with whom the grèces have to do, is greedy of profit, the more easily is he duped. To protect one's self from the cunning of these knaves, it is sufficient never to talk of private affairs before strangers, not to speak in their presence of the money one has, and particularly to abstain from purchasing for thirty francs, pieces of gold worth forty. Every man to his trade.

The famous *Sablin* and *Germain* called the *Père de Tuile*, were two very skilful grèces. One day they contrived to get three thousand five hundred francs from a countryman. Germain, in presence of whom he had boasted of his exploits as a sportsman, played the part of adviser.

"Faith, sir," said he to the countryman, putting the case into his hand, "you have made a profitable speculation, you may spend your winter merrily, and go hunting when you please."

The case contained only small shot. This speech, which I have from the sufferer and the two sharpers, was, it must be allowed, a tolerable specimen of impudence.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

LES RAMASTIQUES.

"Halves"—The reader of posting bills—The accommodating man—Mishap to a *cordon-bleu*—The husband and wife, or the watch and chain—A domestic breeze—Pickpocket and forger—The will of the law.

THE *Ramastiques* are sharpers, who, like many others of the same genus, owe their success solely to the cupidity of their dupes. The exercise of their industry implies an association of three persons, or at least two. This is their mode of proceeding, when they seek to appropriate to themselves the property of another:—From day-break they go and commence their course of observation on the road, near some of the barriers, and then examine very carefully all comers and goers, until they pounce upon one of those individuals whose physiognomy and costume betray excessive simplicity. Their man is a credulous and avaricious fellow: whether countryman or not, such a one, whether coming or going, is always the individual they would fain get hold of, always presuming that he is not in want of money. If they mark down a bird of this feather, one of them, generally the most insinuating of the three, accosts him, and pumps him in that neat and delicate way, that, by the application of some half dozen questions, brings them to the desirable knowledge of what may be the state of the financial department, the exchequer, of the unsuspecting *flat*. This information obtained, a telegraphic dispatch informs the roadjutors of the state of things. If they be favourable, a second sharper, who has gone on forward, lets fall a box, a purse, or a parcel, in such a way that the stranger cannot help remarking the circumstance. He makes his comment out aloud, but at the moment when he stoops

to pick it up, his new acquaintance cries "halves." They stop to see in what consists the treasure—it is generally a precious jewel, a ring richly set, brilliant shirt buttons, ear-rings, &c. A writing always accompanies the gem; what does it contain? The *yokel* seldom knows how to read, and of course his "new fledged comrade" knows no better than himself, and yet the paper may contain some necessary and useful information; but to whom to address it? they fear to commit any indiscretion. In the mean time they continue walking, and suddenly, at a corner of a street, they see a man reading the posting bills, and nothing could be better for their purpose.

"Parbleu," says the comrade, "we could not have met with a better person; here is a gentleman who will relieve us from our embarrassment; show him the paper, he will tell us the meaning of it; but let us be particularly careful not to speak to him of what we have found, for he might put in his claim to a share."

The stranger is delighted, promises prudence, and they go up to the reader, who, with much complaisance, complies with the request, and reads:

"Sir,—I send your ring set with fresh brilliants, for which your servant has paid me two thousand seven hundred and twenty-five francs, for which this is a receipt.

"BRISEBARD, *Jeweller*."

Two thousand seven hundred and twenty-five francs! We may judge how the sound of such a sum, the half of which was to come to him, sounds musically in the rustic's ear. The obliging reader (who is the third accomplice) does not fail to emphasize the figures; they thank him for his complaisance and go on their way.

The next step to be taken is on the subject of the jewel. Shall they return it? certainly not. If it belonged to a poor devil, all very well; but whoever can purchase diamonds is a rich man, and what to a rich man are two thousand seven hundred and twenty-five francs?—a trifle, which he cares nothing about

losing. If they will not return it, it is plain that they will keep it—that is to say, they will realize it in specie.—But where can they sell it? at a jeweller's? perhaps the proprietor of the jewel has already circulated hand-bills, and then some jewellers are so fastidious;—the best way will be not to sell it for some time.—The rustic comprehends all the reasons perfectly. If it were possible, they would divide it on the spot and part good friends, but a division is impossible, and yet each wishes to go on his business. Really, the situation begins to be quite unpleasant, and on both sides they begin to scratch their heads, to produce an idea.

“If I had money,” says the *Ramastique*, “I would willingly give it to you, but I have not a penny.—What can we do?”—then pausing for a moment, he resumes:—

“Listen, you seem a good honest fellow, and I think I can trust you; advance to me a few hundred francs, and when you have sold the thing, you can hand me over the residue, of course keeping back the interest of the sum you may advance to me. Of course you will leave me your address.”

A proposition of this kind is rarely refused. The rustic, seduced by the appearance of a gain, of which he conceals the after-thought, empties his purse with pleasure: if it be not sufficiently stocked, he does not hesitate to add his watch. I have seen some who had given all, even to the buckles of their shoes. The bargain concluded, they separate with a promise to see each other again, although they have secretly determined never to do any thing of the kind if they can avoid it. Out of twenty countrymen thus deceived, eighteen at least give a false name and a false address; and we cannot be astonished, because in this case, to be made a dupe, it is necessary first to be a rogue.

The *Ramastiques* are most frequently Jews, whose wives also follow this line of business. They usually frequent markets, where they prey on the credulity of nurses and cooks, who seem fresh from the provinces,

and have not rubbed off the rust. A chain of brass, excessively well gilt, so as to be with difficulty known from the real metal, composes the object with which they deceive the unsuspecting flats. One of the victims, a *cordon-bleu*, came one day to the police-office to make her complaint; they had stripped her of all her money, her ear-rings, her shawl, and her basket, containing the day's provision, left as the guarantee for fifteen francs, which she was to take to them. As she was in earnest, she hastened back to keep her promise; but on her return she found neither woman, basket, nor provisions. Then only she had her suspicions aroused, which the touchstone of a goldsmith, consulted too late, fully confirmed.

At a certain epoch, the *Ramastiques* were so numerous, that they showed themselves at once in all quarters of the city. I have received on the same morning man and wife, who came to complain of having been duped by *Ramastiques*, the husband in the fauxbourg Saint-Honoré, the wife in the market of the Innocents.

"Never was such a fool as you," said the head of the family, the lord and master, to his unfortunate moiety, "to give your gold chain and ten francs for a copper chain."

"You are a bigger fool yourself! You have certainly a right to talk! go and take your pin to the Mont de Piété, a bit of trumpery glass! and if you please, my gentleman, you were not content with giving the money which you had about you, but must return to the house to get sixty francs, which were all we possessed, two table spoons and your watch."

"I did what I liked: it is no business of yours."

"But it is not the less true, that you have been gulled."

"Gulled, gulled! very fine, madame; I have not always allowed myself to be gulled by gossips, and had you not been gossiping according to custom—"

"If you had passed on your way, without stopping to chatter with the first comer—"

"I chatter! yes, I chatter about my affairs, and you!—"

"Ah! your affairs are well attended to."

"As well as yours, I hope. Go away with you; when you get a gold chain again it shall do your eyes good. Yours was one that went three times round, too. I gave it you for your birth-day present, too, and you ought to be content with it; but you shall long for one three times before you get it."

"How well off we shall be when we want to know the hour!"

"Hold your tongue, you are a fool!"

"Ah, that's very fine! very fine, indeed! They caught you; so much the better, my dear! I only regret one thing, and that is, that they did not get more out of you."

"Parbleu! you only tell me what I knew before! It is not to-day that I have first perceived that you cared very little about the interest of the house."

The couple left the office quarrelling. I know not how long the dispute lasted, but it is only reasonable to suppose that reflection terminated their mutual reproaches. Heaven forbid that, to hasten the reconciliation, they have not been compelled to come to blows!

When three *ramastiques* are together, each of them has a costume adapted to the part he has to play. The one who accosts is generally clad as a workman, a mason, bootmaker, carpenter: sometimes he affects the German or Italian accent, and appears to express himself in French with some difficulty. If he is old, he is a jolly fellow; if young, he is a simpleton. The *faux perdant* (loser of the false gem) is to be distinguished by the length and width of his trowsers, one of the legs of which serve as the conductor of the object to make it reach the ground. The *reader* is generally more respectably dressed than the two others: it is he who puts on the frock-coat and velvet-collar, and is decked in a long-napped hat.

For a long time the *ramastiques* were handed over

to the correctional police, and the maximum of punishment which they underwent was five years' imprisonment. It seemed to me that some distinction should be made with them, and that, when the swindling had been effected by aid of a forged writing, the offence assumed a graver character and fell under the cognizance of the Courts of Assize.

I determined on availing myself of the first opportunity to present to the judicial authorities some observations on this head, and it was not slow to present itself. I apprehended the two oldest professors of the *ramastique* art—BALESE, alias *Marquis*, and his accomplice. When I first gave my opinion, it was disregarded: they persisted in wishing to pass sentence on the offenders according to the custom which time had consecrated; but I returned to the charge with vigour, and the two sharpers, taken before a jury, were committed, as forgers, to solitary imprisonment, and to be branded.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

LES ESCARPES, OR GARCONS DE CAMPAGNE.

Insinuating manners—Good people—The Cornu family—The prepared *alibi*—The peripatetics—The cripple.

NEARLY all assassins by profession assume the appearance of travelling hawkers, cattle-drivers, horse-dealers, &c. Their costume and manners are always assorted with the business they are supposed to carry on: they generally affect mild manners, and a calm, steady air: they are seldom addicted to wine, because they fear lest intoxication should overtake them: they always have correct passports, which are countersigned with the most scrupulous exactitude. In the *auberge* they pay without appearing prodigal: they wish to be thought economical, because economy pre-supposes honesty: however, in settling the bill, they never forget the chamber-maid or waiter. It is of much consequence to an *escarpe* that the servants should think him a good sort of man.

The assassins who assume the guise of travelling hawkers, carry but few goods with them. Their stock generally consists of cutlery, scissors, razors, ribands, laces, and other goods which pack into small compass. The auberges situated in the suburbs of cities and near markets are those which they prefer as their lodging-houses: there they single out their victims, either from amongst real shopkeepers, or the gardeners who come to market to sell the produce of their gardens or fields. They endeavour to learn the amount of the money they carry about with them, the moment of their departure, the road they are about to take, and once in possession of these particulars, they inform their accomplices, who are always at another house, very frequently in the same town. Then they go in advance, and wait in the most

opportune spot for the propitious moment of accomplishing the crime they meditate.

The *escarpes* are malefactors who are never mistrusted, because they are accustomed to see them traverse the roads of the country; and the apparent regularity of their conduct places them out of the reach of suspicion. The Cornu family, whom I have before spoken of in the first volume of these Memoirs*, was a family of *escarpes*, for more than twenty years enjoying the most perfect impunity, and committing many hundred murders before any suspicion was aroused.

The best mode of safety against the attempts of these wretches, is to speak as little as possible of private business, never to talk of receiving money, and to avoid all explanations, both on the object and time of your journey.

Travellers should be on their guard against impertinent intruders on the highways, who profit by all opportunities of accosting persons and entering into conversation. An officious inquirer is always a person whose intentions are suspicious, particularly if he commence the conversation concerning the safety of the roads, or the necessity of being well armed. The farmers, who sometimes do not leave the markets until nightfall, cannot be too much on their guard against persons who like, they say, to travel in company. At any rate, any sudden *liaison* is imprudent when away from home.

The wives of the *escarpes* are also very dangerous women. Familiarized with murder, they willingly lend their aid to consummate it: they teach their children at an early age to be on the watch, and to convey to them information by which they and their husbands may profit: they habituate them to the sight of blood; and to interest them in their success, at each assassination a sort of blood-hound's fee is given to these juvenile monsters.

No person is more complaisant than a male or female

* Vol. i. p. 216, et seq.

escarpe : no one more charitable : all the beggars are their friends, because beggars can furnish useful indications ; and being always on the road and on the tramp, are the natural spies of the high road. The female *escarpes* carry their hypocrisy to such an extent, as to assume all the outward marks of deep devotion. They wear rosaries, scapularies, crucifixes, &c. They assist regularly at the holy offices, and occasionally take the Sacrament at the Holy Table.

The men generally wear a fustian or stuff smock-frock of a blue colour, intended to keep their clothes from the spots of blood. A murder committed, they make away with the frock, bury it, burn it, or sometimes wash it, according as they have more or less time before them. A stick, with a kind of hand-whip, a hat covered with gummed taffety, under which is a red or blue handkerchief enveloping the head, complete the appearance of these hell-hounds, who are skilled in preparing circumstances, which, in time of need, can be adduced as proving an *alibi*. It is, in fact, for this purpose that they have their passports *visé* in all the towns through which they pass.

Happily for society, the *escarpes* are now very few in number except in some of the southern departments. However, I do not fear to affirm that they cannot be effectually extirpated, and assassination prevented, so long as France shall be traversed in all directions by peripatetic glass-sellers, umbrella-sellers, ballad-singers, kettle-menders, mountebanks, jugglers, puppet-show men, organ-players, leaders of bears and camels, showers of magic lanterns, cobblers, slight-of-hand men at fairs, cripples false or real, &c. Apropos of these latter, it is not superfluous to advise travellers to mistrust those men who, fallen into a ditch, and pretending inability to extricate themselves, call to them for help ; let them remember the destiny of the *cul-di-jatte* *, who thus attracted passengers to their assassination. Those who

* One who goes with his sitting part in a bowl.

were unfortunate enough to yield to a feeling of compassion he stabbed to the heart with a dagger the moment they stooped to aid him. It is dangerous to sleep in road-side houses, particularly if lonely. The landlords may be honest, but those who frequent the house are not always so, and the least harm that may happen to a poor devil who passes the night there, is to be plundered of all he has before morning.

The safety of the kingdom requires that we should free our soil from the roving population that infests it : they are a real scourge, and it is impossible to *surveiller* them. At the present day, in the smallest village, there are professions for all wants, and we cannot imagine why measures have not been taken to compel to a residence those peripatetics of every kind. These ambulatory modes of life of individuals who hawk about a trade, can only be suffered in times of barbarism or amongst a people whose civilization is scarcely at its commencement.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Salanbier—The Mayor's order—The false allies—Dogs at fault—A fortunate occurrence—A fugue—The Zero of life—The Alpha, Omega and Beta—1816.

IN the same manner as the *Garçons de Campagne*, the *Riffaudeurs* generally assumed the garb of country-dealers or travelling hawkers. *Riffaudeurs* were a species of thieves who sought to wring from their victims a confession of where they had concealed their treasure, by applying fire to the soles of the feet. When they had selected a fit object for their purpose, they contrived to introduce themselves to his notice under pretence of disposing of their merchandise, and during the course of their bargaining, managed to make themselves acquainted with all the localities of his dwelling, as well as its modes of egress or ingress. When it occurred that a house presented great difficulties in the way of obtaining admittance according to their usual plans, an emissary, disguised in the rags of poverty, was dispatched to seek a night's lodging "for the love of charity," beneath the roof against which their machinations were directed. Such artful masters of their trade seldom failed to work upon the benevolent feelings to which they addressed themselves, and once admitted to the rights of hospitality, they never failed to reward their abused host by rising when all was still, and opening the door for the admission of their comrades. When, as it frequently happened, a watchful dog kept guard over the house, the false mendicant easily reduced him to silence by delighting his olfactory nerves with the odour of a sponge dipped in a peculiar kind of liquor, or by the enticing smell of fresh-boiled horse's liver. These seductions were invariably found sufficient to allay the fury of every species of dog, from the yelping cur to the deep growl

of the mastiff, who would, with all possible docility, follow their tempters about, and submit even to being led by them still and noiselessly from the premises, leaving their master's property in the undisturbed possession of the brigands.

Occasionally, the chauffeurs had recourse to a more summary mode of ridding themselves from all chance of annoyance from the animal, by casting in his way about nightfall a subtle poison, so prompt in its effects that the unfortunate beast was stretched stiff in death by the time their operations commenced.

Doubtlessly, we are best fulfilling the commands of our Maker in helping each other, and kindly bestowing a resting-place to those aching heads and weary limbs, which must otherwise have perished for want of necessary aid ; but in thus obeying the dictates of humanity, would it not be as well to secure our own persons from the insidious attacks of such as we have been describing ? For instance, might not farmers and other inhabitants of the country, manage to appropriate to the use of the wayworn traveller, a chamber as much detached as possible from the part of the house occupied by themselves ? For better security its windows should be grated and defended with strong bars of iron, and the doors secured by locks fixed outwardly, in a manner to defy their being forced ; so that the strangers received by all kindly disposed and charitable persons might thus obtain the rest and refreshment they were in search of ; at the same time their generous entertainers would have nothing to fear from their bad intentions.

Not unfrequently the chauffeurs sought to wipe out in the blood of their victims the traces of their murderous villainy ; at other times, to prevent a chance of recognition, they concealed their features beneath a mask, or blackened them over with a composition which was speedily removed as soon as it had answered their purpose, by rubbing a certain pomade ; at other times they enveloped their head in a black crape. Those who preferred the plan of using a blacken-

ing hue for their countenance, generally carried it about them in a box made with two divisions, in one of which was contained the black dye and in the other the means of removing it.

Before starting upon any of their expeditions they took care to furnish themselves with strong cords of from four to five feet in length, for the purpose of binding their victims.

These wretches always departed singly, having first appointed a general rendezvous, to which they all repaired by different roads and at different intervals of time, travelling thither by the least frequented paths. One piece of their tact consisted in never absenting themselves from home till the shades of night concealed them, and without having first taken the precaution of drawing upon themselves the notice of their neighbours just before they started. The same method observed upon their return had the effect of destroying all suspicion or idea of their having been away from the place even for an hour; and enabled them, in any case which required it, even to prove an *alibi*.

The riffaudeurs disdained to burthen themselves with property less valuable or less portable than gold or diamonds; and as the latter articles were but seldom to be obtained in the country, their usual search was for what current coin they could extract from the unfortunate inhabitants.

The famous Salambier had for a long time projected the constraining a rich farmer of the neighbourhood of Perpignan to give him an account of his money bags, but this scheme was much sooner devised than executed, for the farmer kept a strict guard over his premises; indeed, in the general terror excited by the continual depredations of the chauffeurs, it would have been strange had he not partaken of the general panic. In addition to every security that could be thought of to exclude these formidable robbers from intruding upon his property, the prudent master had placed two vigilant dogs to guard the approaches to it. Salambier

had already reconnoitred the possibility of his enterprise; but the more he reflected upon it, the greater and more insurmountable did the difficulties it presented appear. Nevertheless, as the result of his inquiries proved that the farmer kept a very considerable sum in the house, his covetous propensities were only more keenly excited to obtain it—but how?—that indeed was a problem it required all the ingenuity of his brain to solve. At length, however, he hit upon the following expedient.

Having obtained from some of the inhabitants to whom he was known a certificate of good conduct, &c. he carried it to the Mayor de Poperingue in order to obtain his signature. This important point achieved, he contrived to wash the paper over with muriatic acid in such a manner as to preserve only the attestation of the mayor and the seal of the corporation. On the sheet thus rendered blank, he then caused one of his troop, named Louis Lemaire, to write the following order:—

“Monsieur le Commandant,

“I am given to understand that on the coming night some ten or twelve chauffeurs will attempt to break into the farm d'Oermaille; you will therefore disguise ten of your boldest men, and send them under the command of a subaltern officer to the said farm, in order that they may, in case of necessity, be at hand to assist the farmer, and secure those depredators who may present themselves into his dwelling to levy contributions therein. The magistrate of the corporation of Lebel, to whom you will communicate this order will serve as a guide to your detachment, and introduce the party to the worthy farmer, by whom he is well known.”

Salambier having thus fabricated the order, lost no time in putting himself at the head of ten of his accomplices, and presenting himself at the house of the functionary, who was thus unknowingly to aid him in his criminal projects. This latter, recognizing the signa-

ture, conducted the supposed soldiers and their officers to the farm. Auxiliaries arriving so seasonably could not fail of meeting with a warm reception. Salambier and his gang were received with open arms, and the robber chief and his associates were hailed with thanks and blessings as the preservers and liberators of the whole province.

"Now then, my friends," cried Salambier, (who styled himself a sergeant,) "let's to business; how many are you in number in this house?"

"Fifteen in all," replied the farmer, "that is, including four women and a child."

"Four women and a child! helpless creatures! don't reckon them, pray—only five useless beings who in a time of danger can do nothing but add to one's difficulties. What arms have you?"

"Two good muskets."

"Well, bring them, that they may be in readiness; besides 'tis as well that I should ascertain how far they are likely to be of service to us."

The fire arms were accordingly placed in the hands of Salambier, who immediately withdrew their charges.

"Now," said he, "that I am informed of the state of the place, you may with confidence repose in me the care of defending you; at the proper time I will assign to each one his post; meanwhile the best thing you can all do is to rest in safety, in the full assurance that your garrison will watch over your safety."

Midnight arrived without Salambier's having made any fresh arrangement; all at once he feigned to have heard a noise.

"Up, my lads!" cried he to his companions: "now is the time, we have not a single moment to lose, I will place you so that not a soul shall escape."

At the voice of their chief the whole troop were in arms, and the farmer, seizing a lantern, offered to light them on their way.

"Pray don't disturb yourself," said Salambier, pre-

sending two pistols to his breast ; “ we have the honour to be the worthy gentlemen you style Chauffeurs. Stir not hand or foot, or the next instant sees you dead at my feet.”

The Chauffeurs were so completely armed that it would have been madness for the panic-stricken inhabitants of the farm to have attempted any opposition, and they were compelled to submit to their ferocious visitors, who having fastened their hands firmly behind their backs, locked them in the cellar. Pinioned like the rest, the unfortunate farmer was left standing by the chimney till the rough voice of the robber Salambier called upon him to declare where he kept his money.

“ Heaven knows,” replied the trembling victim, “ that it is long since I have kept more than a mere trifle in the house ; you may be sure since the many alarms the neighbourhood has experienced from the attacks of the Chauffeurs, few people would be imprudent enough to keep large sums by them.”

“ A truce with such idle prating,” exclaimed Salambier ; “ come, my old one, we shall arrive at the truth yet, in spite of you ;” and, making a sign to two of his men, they seized the farmer, and stripping his feet quite bare, anointed them all over with grease.

“ Gentlemen ! Chauffeurs ! I implore of you, have mercy upon me ! I vow, I swear in the name of all the saints, that I have not five shillings in my whole house—let it be well searched—take my keys, demand of me whatsoever you think proper—only speak, all I have is at your service—I will give you a note of hand if you require it.”

“ No, no, my worthy,” cried Salambier, “ you mistake, we are not merchants who can negotiate your promissory notes.—Note of hand indeed ! ha, ha, we do not manage our money upon quite so slow a method—hard cash, my fine fellow, paid upon the nail, is what we are accustomed to.”

“ But, gentlemen !”

“ Oh ! oh ! so you mean to be obstinate, do you ? Well,

you may do as you like, but before you are five minutes older you will be glad enough to tell us the secret of your money bags,—(a large fire was blazing on the hearth). “Comrades,” exclaimed the hardened villain, “*singe* this headstrong fellow.”

But whilst the most horrible of tortures was thus being inflicted on the hapless farmer, piercing cries were heard, evidently proceeding from some one who was vainly striving to escape from the violence of an enraged dog, whose yellings and angry barkings came mingled with the agonized cry of the distressed person. This unexpected uproar arrested the fiery persecution of the brigands; they listened, and discovered in the person on whom the furious beast was satiating his frenzied rage, one of the helpers of the farm, who, having contrived to escape from bondage, had crept out by a back door, in order to bring succour to the rest of the wretched family. By some inconceivable fatality the dogs had not recognised his voice.

Surprised at this unexpected occurrence, Salambier commanded one of his men to go and silence a commotion so likely to attract unpleasant notice; but scarcely had the Chauffeur reached the court-yard, than he in his turn became the object of the dog’s fury, and with such determined hatred did the beast fix his teeth into his flesh that, to save his life, he rushed back to the room he had just before quitted, exclaiming, in the most piteous accents, “Save yourselves—save yourselves.”

This cry, uttered with the expression of the most excessive terror, filled the whole band with the greatest alarm, and scarcely knowing the nature of the danger from which they fled, they precipitated themselves through a window which looked out upon the country, and were soon out of sight. Meanwhile, the farmer, accompanied by the man (who had at length succeeded in silencing the noise of the dog, who now recollected him and was busily licking his hand), descended to the cellar and delivered all his affrighted household from their state of terror. He lost no time in setting off in

full chase of the Chauffeurs, but his diligence was in vain, they had got the start of him, and he found it impossible to overtake them.

Salambier (who related this adventure to me) assured me that at the bottom of his heart he did not regret the circumstance of their hasty retreat—"for," said he to me, "in the dread of being recognised by them, I should have been obliged to murder the whole party."

Salambier's band was one of the most numerous, branching out into immense ramifications, and several years were required ere the whole of it was suppressed. In 1804, several individuals who had formed part of it were executed at Anvers; one of them, whose real name has never transpired, appeared to have received a most finished education. When he had mounted the scaffold, he raised his eyes to the fatal knife, then lowering them to the block, which another criminal styled the Zero of life, "I have seen the *alpha*," said he, "now I see the *omega*;" and turning to the executioner, "behold the *beta*. *Beta*, do your duty." However perfect a Greek scholar a man may be, to make such allusions on the very spot of execution in "*articulo mortis*," would bespeak one possessed by the very demon of pleasantry.

But all the accomplices of Salambier have not yet received the penalty of their offences. I have frequently encountered them in my various peregrinations, and although I have constantly kept my eye upon them, I have tried in vain to terminate the impunity which they have but too long enjoyed, and still continue to experience.

One of these scoundrels has taken up the profession of a street singer, and for a long time astonished the ears of the inhabitants of Paris by singing, or rather bawling, some words to the air of a Tartarian march, whilst, to give greater effect to his performance, he exhibited himself in a Turkish costume.

This skilful personage was one of the most celebrated on the pavé of Paris, where he was only designated by his surname, for the dexterity with which he would

fling a ballad to the seventh story of a house by the aid of a halfpenny, so cleverly placed, that having served to convey the song to the destined window, the copper fell again at its master's feet.

He certainly had strong claims to notoriety, for he was accused of having taken part in the massacres of September, 1793; and in November, 1828, he was seen at the head of a *possé* of window smashers in the Rue St. Denis.

Franchet the police agent, and the Jesuitical party to which he was devoted, cherished great projects, but to bring them to perfection they would have required the aid of assassins, and they actually kept a number in their pay.

Since the year 1816, the Chauffeurs appear to have been condemned to a life of inaction. Their last exploits had for their theatre the south of France, principally the environs of Nismes, Marseilles, and Montpellier, during the dictatorship of Monsieur Trestaillon. Then, both Protestants and Buonapartists who possessed sufficient to tempt their cupidity, became the objects of the Chauffeurs' attacks, and that worthy representative of the *Verdets*, the chamber of "*incompa-rables*," relished the joke, and thought it "*fine nuts to crack*."

APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

WE add, for the benefit of the uninitiated, translations of the three songs that have appeared in Vol. III. of these Memoirs, at the respective pages 56, 59, and 169. The first we have taken from the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* of Blackwood's Magazine for July, 1829 ; the other two, with "all their faults and all their errors," are to be added to the list of the translator's sins, who would apologise to the Muse, did he but know which of the nine presides over slang poetry*.

I.

ODOHERTY—*Cantat.*

"As from ken (1) to ken I was going,
Doing a bit on the prigging lay (2);
Who should I meet, but a jolly blowen (3),
Tol lol, lol lol, tol derol, ay;
Who should I meet, but a jolly blowen,
Who was fly (4) to the time o' day (5).

* Quere *C.y-o*?—Printer's Devil.

- (1) *Ken*—shop, house. (2) *Prigging lay*—thieving business.
(3) *Blowen*—girl, strumpet, sweetheart.
(4) *Fly*, [contraction of *flash*] *awake*—up to, practised in.
(5) *Time o'day*—knowledge of *business*, thieving, &c.

“ Who should I meet, but a jolly blowen,
 Who was fly to the time o’ day ;
 I pattered in flash (6), like a covey (7), knowing,
 Tol lol, &c.

‘ Ay, bub or grubby (8), I say.’

“ I pattered in flash, like a covey knowing,
 ‘ Ay, bub or grubby, I say.’—

‘ Lots of gatter,’ (9) quo’ she, ‘ are flowing,
 Tol lol, &c.

Lend me a lift in the family way (10).

“ ‘ Lots of gatter,’ quo’ she, ‘ are flowing,
 Lend me a lift in the family way.

You may have a crib (11) to stow in,
 Tol lol, &c.

Welcome, my pal (12), as the flowers in May.

“ ‘ You may have a crib to stow in ;
 Welcome, my pal, as the flowers in May.’

To her ken at once I go in,
 Tol lol, &c.

Where in a corner out of the way ;

“ To her ken at once I go in,
 Where in a corner, out of the way,
 With his smeller (13), a trumpet blowing,
 Tol lol, &c.

A regular swell-cove (14) lushy (15) lay.

(6) *Pattered in flash*—spoke in slang.

(7) *Covey*—man.

(8) *Bub and grub*—drink and food.

(9) *Gatter*—porter.

(10) *Family*—the thieves in general. *The family way*—the thieving line.

(11) *Crib*—bed.

(12) *Pal*—friend, companion, paramour.

(13) *Smeller*—nose. *Trumpet blowing* here is not slang, but poetry for snoring.

(14) *Swell-cove*—gentleman, dandy.

(15) *Lushy*—drunk.

“ With his smeller, a trumpet blowing,
 A regular swell-cove lushy lay ;
 To his clies (16) my hooks (17) I throw ‘n,
 Tol lol, &c.

And collar his dragons (18) clear away.

“ To his clies my hooks I throw in,
 And collar his dragons clear away ;
 Then his ticker (19) I set a-going,
 Tol lol, &c.

And his onions (20), chain, and key.

“ Then his ticker I set a-going,
 With his onions, chain, and key.
 Next slipt off his bottom clo’ing,
 Tol lol, &c.

And his gingerbread topper gay.

“ Next slipt off his bottom clo’ing,
 And his gingerbread topper gay.
 Then his other toggery (21) stowing,
 Tol lol, &c.

All with the swag (22), I sneak away.

“ Then his other toggery stowing,
 All with the swag, I sneak away ;
 ‘ Tramp it, tramp it, my jolly blowen,
 Tol lol, &c.

Or be grabbed (23) by the beaks (24) we may.

(16) *Clies*—pockets. (17) *Hooks*—fingers ; in full, *thieving hooks*.

(18) *Collar his dragons*—take his sovereigns ; on the obverse of a sovereign is, or was, a figure of St. George and the *dragon*. The etymon of collar is obvious to all persons who know the taking ways of Bow-street, and elsewhere. It is a whimsical coincidence, that the motto of the Marquis of Londonderry is, “ *Metuenda corolla draconis*.” Ask the city of London, if “ I fear I may not collar the dragons,” would not be a fair translation. (19) *Ticker*—watch. The French slang is *tocquante*.

(20) *Onions*—seals. (21) *Toggery*—clothes from *toga*.

(22) *Swag*—plunder. (23) *Grabbed*—taken.

(24) *Beaks*—police-officers.

“ ‘ Tramp it, tramp it, my jolly blowen,
Or be grabbed by the beaks we may ;
And we shall caper a-heel-and-toeing,
Tol lol, &c.

A Newgate hornpipe some fine day.

“ ‘ And we shall caper a-heel-and-toeing,
A Newgate hornpipe some fine day ;
With the mots (25), their ogles (26) throwing,
Tol lol, &c.

And old Cotton (27) humming his pray (28).

“ ‘ With the mots their ogles throwing,
And old Cotton humming his pray ;
And the fogle-hunters (29) doing,
Tol lol, &c.

Their morning fake (30) in the prigging lay.’ ”

(25) *Mots—Gir's.*

(26) *Ogles—eyes.*

(27) *Old Cotton—the Ordinary of Newgate.*

(28) *Humming his pray—saying his prayers.*

(29) *Fogle hunters—pickpockets.*

(30) *Morning fake—morning thievery.*

II.

Ten or a dozen “ cocks of the game ”
On the prigging lay (1) to the flash-house (2) came,
Lushing blue ruin and heavy wet (3)
Till the darkey (4), when the downy (5) set.
All toddled (6), and began the hunt
For readers, tatlers, fogles, or blunt (7).

1) Thieving. (2) House frequented by thieves and prostitutes.

(3) Drinking gin and porter. (4) Night. (5) Knowing.

6) Went. (7) Pocket-books, watch &s, handkerchiefs, and money

Whatever swag (8) we chance for to get,
 All is fish what comes to net :
 Mind your eye, and draw the yokel (9),
 Don't disturb or use the folk ill.
 Keep a look out, if the beaks (10) are nigh,
 And cut your stick (11), before they're fly (12).

As I vas a crossing St. James's Park
 I met a swell, a well-togged (13) spark.
 I stops a bit : then toddles quicker,
 For I'd prigg'd his reader, drawn his ticker (14) ;
 Then he calls—" Stop thief !" Thinks I, my master
 That's a hint to me to mizzle (15) faster.

When twelve bells chime the prigs (16) return,
 And rap at the ken of Uncle ——— :
 Uncle open the door of your crib (17)
 If you'd share the swag, or have one dib (18).
 Quickly draw the bolt of your ken,
 Or we'll not shell out a mag (19), old ———.

Then, says Uncle, says he to his blowen,
 " D'ye twig (20) these coves, my mot (21) so knowing ?
 Are they out and outers (22), deary ?
 Are they fogle-hunters, or cracksmen leary (23) ?
 Are they coves of the ken (24), d'ye know ?
 Shall I let 'em in, or tell 'em to go ?"

" Oh ! I knows 'em now ; hand over my breeches—
 I always looks out for business—vich is
 A reason vy a man should rouse
 At any hour for the good of his house.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (8) Booty. | (9) Rob the unguarded. | (10) Officers. |
| (11) Run away. | (12) Find it out. | (13) Well dressed. |
| (14) Watch. | (15) Run. | (16) Thieves. |
| (17) House. | (18) The least share. | (19) Give you a halfpenny |
| (20) Know. | (21) Woman. | (22) Celebrated characters. |
| (23) Daring burglars. | (24) Frequenters of the house. | |

The top o'the morning, gemmen all,
And for vot you wants I begs you'll call."

But now the beaks were on the scent,
And watched by moonlight where we went ;—
Stagged (25) us a toddling into the ken,
And were down (26) upon us all ; and then
Who should I spy but the slap-up spark
What I eased of the swag in St. James's Park.

There's a time, says King Sol (27), to dance and sing ;
I know there's a time for another thing :
There's a time to pipe and a time to snivel—
I wish all Charlies (28) and Beaks at the Devil :
For they grabbed (29) me on the prigging lay (30),
And I know I'm booked for Botny Bay (31).

(25) Watched.	(26) Surprised.
(27) King Solomon, we presume.	(28) Watchmen.
(29) Seized.	(30) Thieving.
	(31) Sentenced.

III.

" Happy the days when I vorked away,
In my usual line in the prigging lay ;
Making from this and that and t'other,
A tidy living without no bother.
When my little crib vas stored vith swag,
And my cly (1) vas a vell-lined money bag,
Jolly vas I, for I feared no evil,
Funked (2) at nought, and pitched care to the devil.

• I had, beside my blunt, my blowen
' So gay, no nutty (3), and so knowing ; '

(1) Pocket.	(2) Feared.	(3) Fond.
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On the very best of grub (4) we lived,
 And sixpence a quartern for gin I gived :
 My toggs (5) was the sporting'st blunt could buy,
 And a slap up out and outer was I.
 With my mot on my arm and my tile on my head,
 That ere's a gemman every von said.

“ A-coming away from Wauxhall von night,
 I cleared out a muzzy covey (6) quite ;
 He'd been a strutting away like a king,
 And on his digit (7) he sported a ring,
 A di'mond sparkle, flash, and knowing,
 Thinks I, I'll vatch the vay he's going,
 And fleece my gemman neat and clever,
 Or, at least, I'll try my best endeavour.

“ A'ter the singing and firevorks vas ended,
 I follows my gemman the vay he bended ;
 In a dark corner I trips up his heels,
 Then for his tatler and reader I feels,
 I pouches his blunt, and I draws his ring,
 Prigged his buckles and every thing,
 And saying, ‘ I thinks as you can't follow, man,’
 I pikes me off to Ikey Solomon (8).

“ Then it happened d'ye see that my mot,
 Yellow (9) a-bit 'bout the swag I'd got,
 Thinking that I should jeer and laugh,
 Although I never tips no chaff (10),
 Tries her hand at the downy trick,
 And prigs in a shop, but precious quick
 ‘ Stop thief ’ vas the cry, and she vas taken,
 I cuts and runs and saves my bacon.

(4) Victuals. (5) Clothes. (6) Half-tipsy gentleman.
 (7) Finger. (8) A celebrated fence or receiver of stolen goods.
 (9) Jealous. (10) Humbug.

“ Then says he, says Sir Richard Birnie,
 ‘ I advise you to nose on your pals (11), and turn the
 Snitch (12) on the gang, that’ll be the best vay
 To save your scrag (13).’ Then, without delay,
 He so prewailed on the treach’rous varmint (14)
 That she vas noodled by the Bow-street sarmin(15).
 Then the beaks they grabbed me and to pris’n I vas
 dragg’d
 And for fourteen years of my life I vas lagg’d (16).

“ My mot must now be growing old,
 And so am I, if the truth be told ;
 But the only vay to get on in the world,
 Is to go vith the stream and however ve’re twirled,
 To bear all rubs : and ven ve suffer
 To hope for the smooth ven ve feels the rougher,
 Though very hard, I confess it appears,
 To be lagged, for a lark (17), for fourteen years.”

(11) Impeach your accomplices.

(12) Confess.

(13) Neck.

(14) *Slangicè* for vermin.

(15) Sermon.

(16) Transported.

(17) Bit of fun.

We also append the French version of the galley-slaves’
 complaint, the translation (only) of which appeared in
 Vol. I. p. 129. (See Vol. I.)

“ La chaîne,
 C’est la grêle ;
 Mais c’est égal,
 C’a n’fait pas de mal.

“ Nos habits sont écarlate,
 Nous portons au lieu d’chapeaux
 Des bonnets et point d’cravatte,
 C’à fait brosse pour les jabots.

Nous aurions tort de nous plaindre,
 Nous sommes des enfants gâtés,
 Et c'est crainte de nous perdre
 Que l'on nous tient enchaînés.

• Nous f'rons des belles ouvrages
 En paille ainsi qu'en cocos,
 Dont nous ferons étalage
 Sans qu'nos boutiques pay' d'impôts.
 Ceux qui visit'nt le bagne
 N' s'en vont jamais sans acheter,
 Avec ce produit d' l'aubaine
 Nous nous arrosons l'gosier.

.

Quand vient l'heur' de s'bourrer l'ventre,
 En avant les haricots !
 Cà n'est pas bon, mais çà entre
 Tout comm' le meilleur fricot.
 Notr' guignon eût été pire,
 Si, comm' des jolis cadets,
 On nous eût fait *raccourcire*
 A l'abbaye d' Mont-à-r'gret (1).

(1) The guillotine.

SEQUEL.

THERE is a peculiarity respecting these Memoirs now laid before the Public which entirely distinguishes them from the preceding Autobiographies of this series. M. Vidocq is still living, and we thus are compelled to falsify that portion of our general title-page which promises to the reader a "compendious Sequel, carrying on the narrative to the death of each writer." We do not expect, however, that this will in any way detract from the interest of the work ; on the contrary, the wild and wonderful with which it abounds will have an additional charm ; for the reader who knows that the hero of so many an "accident by flood and field" is still living,—that he who has escaped from dangers dire and perilous,—who has been preserved miraculously from the steel of the bravo and the revenge of those whose hands are always ready to compass the machinations of their heads, has escaped with life ;—it will rather add to than diminish from the attractions of the Memoirs.

To those who may assert their disbelief of the personal deeds and perils of Vidocq, we suggest this plain fact,—none of them have been contradicted, and yet there are those existing whose wish and interest it would be to prove their falsity. We therefore assume their verity as incontrovertible.

After his resignation of office, at the termination of Villele's ministry, M. Vidocq was succeeded by Cocolacour, who had been one of his band. Coco, as we learn from unquestionable authority, had been from his

earliest days a professed and expert thief, and, we presume, was promoted to his present station on the strength of the old proverb, "*set a thief to catch a thief.*" Now Vidocq has not used very measured terms in his mention of Coco, and were his statements impeachable, it is not probable that Lacour would have allowed them to pass unnoticed. But it is not our province or intention to enter into a discussion of the veracity of Vidocq's *Memoirs*: be they true or false, were they purely fiction from the first chapter to the last, they would, from fertility of invention, knowledge of human nature, and ease of style, rank only second to the novels of Le Sage. The two first volumes are perhaps more replete with interest, because the hero is the leading actor in every scene; but in the subsequent portions, when he gives the narrative of others, we cannot but admire the power and graphic talent of the author. Serjeant Belle-Rose is scarcely inferior to the Serjeant Kite of Farquhar; and the episodes of Court and Raoul, in the third volume, and that of Adèle d'Escars, in the fourth, are surpassed in description, depth of feeling and pathos, by no work of romance with which we are acquainted.

Since the commencement of these *Memoirs*, M. Vidocq has given up his paper manufactory at St. Mandé, and has been subsequently confined in Sainte Pelagie for debt. His embarrassments are stated to have arisen from a passion for gambling, a propensity which, once indulged, takes deep root in the human mind; and few indeed, lamentably few, are those who can effectually eradicate the fatal passion. Vidocq, who could assume all shapes like a second Proteus, who underwent bitter hardships, and unsparingly jeopardised his life at any time, could not resist the fell temptation which has brought him to distress and a prison.

It must be painful to one, whose peace of mind seems

so greatly to depend on the enjoyment of freedom, and all whose exertions and success resulted from an anxiety to secure his liberty, to be immured in a gaol. To himself it must be a galling chain, to his enemies an important triumph. The Delilah has at length appeared who could reduce Samson's strength to weakness; the locks have been shorn; he has succumbed beneath the power of the Philistines. Poor human nature!

It has been stated in some of the Journals that Vidocq has a son named Julius, who was condemned to the galleys, and when liberated was employed by his father at St. Mandé. This must be another bitter in life's cup, which Vidocq seems condemned to drain to the very dregs.

At the end of the Second Volume we were told by the autobiographer, that we were to have ample information on all points connected with the police of France; he was to untwist all the "hidden links" of the system, so effectually carried into action, and whereby, as he tells us, he has rendered Paris the safest residence in the world.

He thus continues—

"I will display to the glare of noon-day, the faults of our criminal informations, and the still greater errors of our penal code, so absurd in many of its enactments. I will ask for alterations, revisions, and what I ask will be conceded; because reason, come from where she may, is always sooner or later understood. I will offer important ameliorations in the regulations of prisons and bagnes; and as I compassionate more deeply than another can, the sufferings of my old companions in misery, condemned or pardoned, I will probe the wound to the bottom; and shall, perhaps, be the happy man, who will offer to a philanthropic legislator, the only remedies which it is possible to apply, and which alone will not be temporising but effective. In delineations as varied as novel, I will give the original traits of many classes of society, destitute

as yet of all civilization, or rather which have emanated from her, and infest her, attended by all that is hideous and infamous !”

Vidocq continues in this strain from page 200 of vol. II. to the end of that volume ; and yet, how far has he performed this promise ? He has given us a nomenclature of the assassins, thieves, and swindlers of France, and no more. He has interspersed the list with brief anecdotes and trite advice ; he has told us nothing with which we were not previously acquainted, as far as concerns the modes adopted by miscreants of all denominations to attain their ends, whether by robbery only, or by plunder, wedded to murder.

Where are “ his important ameliorations ” ? Where his “ only remedies which it is possible to apply, and which alone will be not temporising, but effective ” ? Where his “ institutions, to purify and regulate the manners of the people ” ? Where are his accounts “ of all police now existing, from that of the Jesuit to that of the court ; from the police of the *Bureau des Mœurs* to the diplomatic police ” ? Where is the show-up of all the wheel-work, great and small, of those machines, which are always in motion ? Where is the “ developement of all those things (and more), without disguise, without fear, without temper ” ? Where, we ask, are all these details,—all these revelations,—all this information,—all this counsel ?—And Echo answers—“ Where ? ”

Sieur Eugene-François Vidocq, you are weighed in the scale of your own erection, and are found wanting ! And do your omissions, repressions, result from fear ?—We believe not. Do they result from incapability, from incompetency to undertake, from inadequacy to fulfil your promised task ?—We believe not. Was it that you were compelled to silence by the powers that be ? Was it that you wished to puff your work into a more extensive sale ?

Was it that, in durance vile, when cash ran low, and necessities high,—when pocket and stomach both were empty, that “your poverty and not your will consented” to refrain from making those disclosures, which you had pledged yourself to the public at large that you would make? Vidocq! was an offer made you, and did you sell yourself? We ask these questions, because we think we are entitled to an explanation. “We pause for a reply.”

That Vidocq made all these promises is no less true than that he has falsified his word. Were it not that the fourth volume is published as the ‘*Quatrième et dernier tome,*’ we might have been led to believe that the work would have been extended beyond the limit originally assigned. We are unwilling to judge uncharitably, but it is not improbable that Vidocq has had his lips locked by a golden padlock, or his successor, Coco-Lacour, may have had sufficient interest to have compelled the omission of certain portions of the promised intelligence.

We learn, too, that Vidocq has had some dispute with his publisher, Tenon, and may, therefore, wilfully withhold the information and explanation to which he was pledged. The fourth volume terminates very abruptly, and in a mode entirely contrary to Vidocq’s usual style, he being somewhat addicted to digression. It may be possible that he has written this last volume to complete his original agreement with the publisher, and may give us, at some future period, the detailed accounts of all he promised.

In the narratives interwoven in the third volume, the critical reader will not fail to detect a spinning out of the subject, a prolongation of the theme into minutiae, which, though exemplary of the accurate observation of the writer, are yet somewhat too much in detail, losing in power what they gain in length. In the episode of Adèle d’Escars, trifling circumstances are given with a precision

which must emanate from the Author's imagination, and induces us to think we are reading a well-devised tale of fiction rather than the facts of real life, describing trials and temptations that are of actual occurrence.

It would seem as though much of the original matter had been repressed, and these indications of tediousness are the results of an obligation on the Author to comply with his agreement with his publisher, who, in his bargain, should have added *quality* as well as *quantity*. Be this as it may, there are redeeming points in the work which must always make it a work of original and attractive merit, and one that will continue to be read and wondered at, and wondered at and read, when many of the ephemeral and trashy memoirs of the same period are forgotten.

It affords for the lovers of romance all that the wildest taste could desire of hair-breadth 'scapes, imminent dangers, and powerful description; for the amateurs of fun, there are sketches as comic as humour could devise; and for the philosopher, who looks and scrutinizes into the workings of the mind and the strength or weakness of humanity, there is food enough for reflection and speculation.

We have been compelled occasionally to prune down pruriencies offensive to English taste when considered (as we consider it) synonymous with decency and decorum. A greater latitude both of action and expression is allowed, nay encouraged, amongst our *politer* French neighbours, who relish a *double entendre* and have a zest for an indecent simile, or obscene allusion. We are not sticklers, and have the same opinion, to a certain extent, that Dean Swift had when he said that "a nice man was a man of nasty ideas;" but there is a line of demarcation which cannot be too strongly drawn between inoffensive pleasantries and coarse ribaldry, or indelicate allusion; and we

trust that the increasing 'progress of knowledge and diffusion of information, whilst they encourage literature, will also tend to an universal reprobation of anything that trenches on the bounds of propriety, or encourages wit at the expense of decency.

The true object of literature is not to pander to bad passions, encourage gross taste, or cater to prurient imagination ; but to correct evil propensities by excellent example, to warn by precept, to instruct whilst it delights, and to call into action all those better feelings in the heart of man which tend to his individual happiness, and have weight and moral influence on the well-being of a nation.

H. T. R.

London,
August 11, 1829.

THE END.

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Vidocq, Eugene Francois
Memoirs of Vidocq,
principal agent of the
French police until 1827

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